

LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER 1884.

'I SAY NO.'

Or, the Note-Letter Answered.

By WILKIE COLLINS.*

BOOK THE THIRD.

The Distoberg.

CHAPTER XLVI.

PRETENDING.

MISS DE SOR began cautiously with an apology. 'Excuse me, Mr. Mirabel, for reminding you of my presence.'

Mr. Mirabel made no reply.

'I beg to say,' Francine proceeded, 'that I didn't intentionally see you kiss Emily's hand.'

Mirabel stood, looking at the roses which Emily had left on her chair, as completely absorbed in his own thoughts as if he had been alone in the garden.

'Am I not even worth notice?' Francine asked. 'Ah, I know to whom I am indebted for your neglect!' She took him familiarly by the arm, and burst into a harsh laugh. 'Tell me now, in confidence—do you think Emily is fond of you?'

The impression left by Emily's kindness was still fresh in Mirabel's memory: he was in no humour to submit to the jealous resentment of a woman whom he regarded with perfect indifference. Through the varnish of politeness

which overlaid his manner, there rose to the surface the underlying insolence, hidden, on all ordinary occasions, from all human eyes. He answered Francine—mercilessly answered her—at last.

'It is the dearest hope of my life that she may be fond of me,' he said.

Francine dropped his arm. 'And fortune favours your hopes,' she added, with an ironical assumption of interest in Mirabel's prospects. 'When Mr. Morris leaves us to-morrow, he removes the only obstacle you have to fear. Am I right?'

'No; you are wrong.'

'In what way, if you please?'

'In this way. I don't regard Mr. Morris as an obstacle. Emily is too delicate and too kind to hurt his feelings—she is not in love with him. There is no absorbing interest in her mind to divert her thoughts from me. She is idle and happy; she thoroughly enjoys her visit to this house, and I am associated with her enjoyment. There is my chance—'

* *The Right of Translation is Reserved.*

He suddenly stopped. Listening to him thus far, unnaturally calm and cold, Francine now showed that she felt the lash of his contempt. A hideous smile passed slowly over her white face. It threatened the vengeance which knows no fear, no pity, no remorse—the vengeance of a jealous woman. Hysterical anger, furious language, Mirabel was prepared for. The smile frightened him.

'Well!' she said scornfully, 'why don't you go on?'

A bolder man might still have maintained the audacious position which he had assumed. Mirabel's faint heart shrank from it. He was eager to shelter himself under the first excuse that he could find. His ingenuity, paralysed by his fears, was unable to invent anything new. He feebly availed himself of the commonplace trick of evasion which he had read of in novels, and seen in action on the stage. 'Is it possible,' he asked, with an over-acted assumption of surprise, 'that you think I am in earnest?'

In the case of any other person, Francine would have instantly seen through that flimsy pretence. But the love which accepts the meanest crumbs of comfort that can be thrown to it—which fawns and grovels and deliberately deceives itself, in its own intensely selfish interests—was the love that burned in Francine's breast. The wretched girl believed Mirabel with such an ecstatic sense of relief that she trembled in every limb, and dropped into the nearest chair.

'I was in earnest,' she said faintly. 'Didn't you see it?'

He was perfectly shameless; he denied that he had seen it, in the most positive manner. 'Upon my honour, I thought you were mystifying me, and I humoured the joke.'

She sighed, and looked at him with an expression of tender reproach. 'I wonder whether I can believe you!' she said softly.

'Indeed you may believe me!' he assured her.

She hesitated—for the pleasure of hesitating. 'I don't know. Emily is very much admired by some men. Why not by you?'

'For the best of reasons,' he answered. 'She is poor, and I am poor. Those are facts which speak for themselves.'

'Yes—but Emily is bent on attracting you. She would marry you to-morrow, if you asked her. Don't attempt to deny it! Besides, you kissed her hand.'

'O, Miss de Sor!'

'Don't call me "Miss de Sor!" Call me Francine. I want to know why you kissed her hand.'

'Habit,' he eagerly explained—'mere habit. You forget that I have lived abroad for many years—'

His experience in foreign countries failed to interest her. 'If I forgive you,' she interposed, 'will you kiss *my* hand?'

Mirabel obeyed, with a graceful alacrity which was a compliment in itself. 'On the continent,' he resumed, 'kissing a lady's hand—'

Francine interrupted him again. She remarked that he had not yet addressed her by her Christian name. 'Why don't you call me "Francine"?''

He humoured her with inexhaustible servility. 'I was about to say, Francine, that kissing a lady's hand is only a form of thanking her for kindness. You must own that Emily—'

She interrupted him for the third time. 'Emily!' she repeated. 'Are you as familiar as that already? Does she call you "Miles," when you are by yourselves? Is there any effort at

fascination which this charming creature has left untried? She told you, no doubt, what a lonely life she leads in her poor little home!

Even Mirabel felt that he must not permit this to pass.

'She has said nothing to me about herself,' he answered. 'What I know of her, I know from Mr. Wyvil.'

'O, indeed!—You asked Mr. Wyvil about her family, of course? What did he say?'

'He said she lost her mother when she was a child—and he told me her father had died suddenly, a few years since, of heart complaint.'

'Well, and what else?—Never mind now! Here is somebody coming.'

The person was only one of the servants. Mirabel felt profoundly grateful to the man for interrupting them.

'A message, I suppose,' he said to Francine. 'We are wanted at the house.'

It turned out that only one of them was wanted—and that one was Mirabel. 'Miss Brown wishes to speak to you, sir, if you are not engaged.' There was the message.

Francine controlled herself until the man was out of hearing.

'Upon my word, this is too shameless!' she declared indignantly. 'Emily can't leave you with me for five minutes without wanting to see you again. If you go to her, after all that you have said to me,' she cried, threatening Mirabel with her outstretched hand, 'you are the meanest of men!'

He was the meanest of men—he carried out his cowardly submission to the last extremity.

'Only say what you wish me to do,' he replied.

Even Francine expected some

little resistance from a creature bearing the outward appearance of a man. 'O, do you really mean it?' she asked.

He answered jauntily by a bow.

She could hardly feel sure of him yet. 'Let me go to Emily instead of you,' she suggested. 'I will undertake to make your excuse.'

'I will do anything to please you.'

Francine gave him a farewell look. Her admiration made a desperate effort to express itself appropriately in words. 'You are not a man,' she said, 'you are an angel!'

Left by himself, Mirabel sat down to rest. He reviewed his own conduct with perfect complacency. 'Not one man in a hundred could have managed that she-devil as I have done,' he thought. 'How shall I explain matters to Emily?'

Considering this question, he looked by chance at the unfinished crown of roses. 'The very thing to help me!' he said—and took out his pocket-book, and wrote these lines on a blank page:

'I have had a scene of jealousy with Miss de Sor, which is beyond all description. To spare you a similar infliction, I have done violence to my own feelings. Instead of instantly obeying the message which you have so kindly sent to me, I remain here for a little while—entirely for your sake. That poor mad creature must be humoured, or she may create a scandal in the house. I know you will understand and forgive me.'

Having torn out the page, and twisted it up among the roses, so that only a corner of the paper appeared in view, Mirabel called to a lad who was at work in the garden, and gave him his directions, accompanied by a shilling.

'Take those flowers to the servants' hall, and tell one of the maids to put them in Miss Brown's room. Stop! Which is the way to the fruit-garden?'

The lad gave the necessary directions. Mirabel walked away slowly with his hands in his pockets. His nerves had been shaken; he thought a little fruit might refresh him.

CHAPTER XLVII.

DEBATING.

IN the mean while Emily had been true to her promise to relieve Mirabel's anxieties, on the subject of Miss Jethro. Entering the drawing-room in search of Alban, she found him talking with Cecilia, and heard her own name mentioned as she opened the door.

'Here she is at last!' Cecilia exclaimed. 'What in the world has kept you all this time in the rose-garden?'

'Has Mr. Mirabel been more interesting than usual?' Alban asked gaily. Whatever sense of annoyance he might have felt in Emily's absence, was forgotten the moment she appeared; all traces of trouble in his face vanished when they looked at each other.

'You shall judge for yourself,' Emily replied with a smile. 'Mr. Mirabel has been speaking to me of a relative who is very dear to him—his sister.'

Cecilia was surprised. 'Why has he never spoken to us of his sister?' she asked.

'It's a sad subject to speak of, my dear. His sister lives a life of suffering—she has been for years a prisoner in her room. He writes to her constantly. His letters from Monksmoor have in-

terested her, poor soul. It seems he said something about me—and she has sent a kind message, inviting me to visit her one of these days. Do you understand it now, Cecilia?'

'Of course I do! Tell me—is Mr. Mirabel's sister older or younger than he is?'

'Older.'

'Is she married?'

'She is a widow.'

'Does she live with her brother?' Alban asked.

'O, no! She has her own house—far away in Northumberland.'

'Is she near Sir Jervis Redwood?'

'I fancy not. Her house is on the coast.'

'Any children?' Cecilia inquired.

'No: she is quite alone. Now, Cecilia, I have told you all I know—and I have something to say to Mr. Morris. No, you needn't leave us; it's a subject in which you are interested. A subject,' she repeated, turning to Alban, 'which you may have noticed is not very agreeable to me.'

'Miss Jethro?' Alban guessed.

'Yes; Miss Jethro.'

Cecilia's curiosity instantly asserted itself. 'We have tried to get Mr. Mirabel to enlighten us, and tried in vain,' she said. 'You are a favourite. Have you succeeded?'

'I have made no attempt to succeed,' Emily replied. 'My only object is to relieve Mr. Mirabel's anxiety, if I can—with your help, Mr. Morris.'

'In what way can I help you?'

'You mustn't be angry.'

'Do I look angry?'

'You look serious. It is a very simple thing. Mr. Mirabel is afraid that Miss Jethro may have said something disagreeable about him, which you might hesitate to repeat. He naturally wishes (if

there is any such necessity) to set himself right—and he thought of speaking to you, but feared he might be misunderstood. There is no such danger where I am concerned: so I speak for him. Is he making himself uneasy, without any reason?

‘Without the slightest reason. I have concealed nothing from Mr. Mirabel.’

‘Thank you for the explanation.’ She turned to Cecilia. ‘May I send one of the servants with a message? I may as well put an end to Mr. Mirabel’s suspense.’

The man was summoned, and was despatched with the message. Emily would have done well, after this, if she had abstained from speaking further of Miss Jethro. But Mirabel’s doubts had, unhappily, inspired a similar feeling of uncertainty in her own mind. She was now disposed to attribute the tone of mystery in Alban’s unlucky letter to some possible concealment, suggested by regard for herself. ‘I wonder whether I have any reason to feel uneasy?’ she said—half in jest, half in earnest.

‘Uneasy about what?’ Alban inquired.

‘About Miss Jethro, of course! Has she said anything of me which your kindness has concealed?’

Alban seemed to be a little hurt by the doubt which her question implied. ‘Was that your motive,’ he asked, ‘for answering my letter as cautiously as if you had been writing to a stranger?’

‘Indeed you are quite wrong!’ Emily earnestly assured him. ‘I hardly knew how to answer you, I was so perplexed and startled—but there was no doubt of you in my mind. I consulted with Cecilia; and what I wrote, I wrote under her father’s advice. Shall we drop the subject?’

Alban would have willingly dropped the subject—but for that unfortunate allusion to Mr. Wyvil. Emily had unconsciously touched him on a sore place. He had already heard from Cecilia of the consultation over his letter, and had disapproved of it. In the daughter’s presence, it was impossible for him to say plainly that the father had consented to interfere in a matter which did not concern him. But he was sufficiently displeased to tell Emily what he felt, in guarded language. ‘I think you were wrong to trouble Mr. Wyvil,’ he said.

The altered tone of his voice suggested to Emily that he would have spoken more severely, if Cecilia had not been in the room. She thought him needlessly ready to complain of a harmless proceeding—and she too returned to the subject, after having proposed to drop it not a minute since!

‘You didn’t tell me I was to keep your letter a secret,’ she replied.

Cecilia made matters worse—with the best intentions. ‘I’m sure, Mr. Morris, my father was only too glad to give Emily his advice,’ she said. ‘You know what a clever man he is? Well! he was as much puzzled as we were; and I am sure he regretted it, for Emily’s sake.’

Alban remained silent—ungraciously silent, as Emily thought, after Mr. Wyvil’s kindness to him.

‘The thing to regret,’ she remarked, ‘is that Mr. Morris allowed Miss Jethro to leave him without explaining herself. In his place, I should have insisted on knowing why she wanted to prevent me from meeting Mr. Mirabel in this house.’

Alban still listened in silence: now, when it was too late, he was sorry that he had mentioned Mr. Wyvil’s name.

Cecilia made another unlucky attempt at judicious interference. This time, she tried a gentle remonstrance.

'Remember, Emily, how Mr. Morris was situated. He could hardly be rude to a lady. And I daresay she had good reasons, for not wishing to explain herself.'

'That is exactly my complaint against her,' Emily rejoined. 'If Miss Jethro had good reasons, I want to know what they were.'

Francine opened the drawing-room door and heard Emily's last words.

'Miss Jethro again!' she exclaimed.

'Where is Mr. Mirabel?' Emily asked. 'I sent him a message.'

'He regrets to say he is otherwise engaged for the present,' Francine replied, with spiteful politeness. 'Don't let me interrupt the conversation. Who is this Miss Jethro, whose name is on everybody's lips?'

Alban spoke at last. 'We have done with the subject,' he said sharply.

'Because I am here?'

'Because we have said more than enough about Miss Jethro already.'

'Speak for yourself, Mr. Morris,' Emily answered, resenting the masterful tone which Alban's interference had assumed. 'I have not done with Miss Jethro yet, I can assure you.'

'My dear, you don't know where she lives,' Cecilia reminded her.

'Leave me to discover it!' Emily answered hotly. 'Perhaps Mr. Mirabel knows. I shall ask Mr. Mirabel.'

'I thought you would find a reason for returning to Mr. Mirabel,' Francine remarked.

Before Emily could reply, one of the maids entered the room with a wreath of roses in her hand.

'Mr. Mirabel sends you these flowers, Miss. The boy said they were to be taken to your room. I thought it was a mistake, and I have brought them to you here.'

Francine, who happened to be nearest to the door, took the roses from the girl on pretence of handing them to Emily. Her jealous vigilance detected the one visible morsel of Mirabel's letter, twisted up with the flowers. Had Emily entrapped him into a secret correspondence with her! 'A scrap of waste paper among your roses,' she said, crumpling it up in her hand as if she meant to throw it away.

But Emily was too quick for her. She caught Francine by the wrist. 'Waste paper or not,' she said; 'it was among my flowers and it belongs to me.'

Francine gave up the letter, with a look which might have startled Emily if she had noticed it. She handed the roses to Cecilia. 'I was making a wreath for you to wear this evening, my dear—and I left it in the garden. It's not quite finished yet.'

Cecilia was delighted. 'How lovely it is!' she exclaimed. 'And how very kind of you! I'll finish it myself.' She turned away to the conservatory.

'I had no idea I was interfering with a letter,' said Francine; watching Emily with fiercely-attentive eyes, while she smoothed out the crumpled paper.

Having read what Mirabel had written to her, Emily considered a little—then rang the bell, and recalled the maid. 'Is the messenger waiting?' she asked. Hearing that the lad was still in the house, she wrote a few lines, addressed to Mirabel. Giving them to the maid at the door, she looked round towards Alban.

He had noticed something in Francine's face which he was at a

loss to understand, but which made her presence in the room absolutely hateful to him. Emily stopped him just as he was about to follow Cecilia into the conservatory.

'I have set Mr. Mirabel's uneasy mind at rest,' she said—'thanks to you. And I have done something else which I am afraid will not meet with your approval. I have asked him if he knows Miss Jethro's address.'

'I hope he is as ignorant of it as I am,' Alban answered gravely.

'Are we going to quarrel over Miss Jethro, as we once quarrelled over Mrs. Rook?' Emily asked—with the readiest recovery of her good humour. 'Come! come! I am sure you are as anxious, in your own private mind, to have this matter cleared up as I am.'

'With one difference—that I think of consequences, and you don't.' He said it, in his gentlest and kindest manner, and stepped into the conservatory.

'Never mind the consequences,' she called after him, 'if we can only get at the truth. I hate being deceived!'

'There is no person living who has better reason than you have to say that.'

Emily looked round with a start. Alban was out of hearing. It was Francine who had answered her.

'What do you mean?' she said.

Francine hesitated. A ghastly paleness overspread her face.

'Are you ill?' Emily asked.

'No—I am thinking.'

After waiting for a moment in silence, Emily moved away towards the door of the drawing-room. Francine suddenly held up her hand.

'Stop!' she cried.

Emily stood still.

'My mind is made up,' Francine said.

'Made up—to what?'

'You asked what I meant, just now.'

'I did.'

'Well, my mind is made up to answer you. Miss Emily Brown, you are leading a sadly frivolous life in this house. I am going to give you something more serious to think about than your flirtation with Mr. Mirabel. O, don't be impatient! I am coming to the point. Without knowing it yourself, you have been the victim of deception for years past—cruel deception—wicked deception that puts on the mask of mercy.'

'Are you alluding to Miss Jethro?' Emily asked in astonishment. 'I thought you were strangers to each other. Just now, you wanted to know who she was.'

'I know nothing about her. I care nothing about her. I am not thinking of Miss Jethro.'

'Who are you thinking of?'

'I am thinking,' Francine answered, 'of your dead father.'

CHAPTER XLVIII.

INVESTIGATING.

HAVING revived his sinking energies in the fruit-garden, Mirabel seated himself under the shade of a tree, and reflected on the critical position in which he was placed by Francine's jealousy.

If Miss de Sor continued to be Mr. Wyvil's guest, there seemed to be no other choice before Mirabel than to leave Monks-moor—and to trust to a favourable reply to his sister's invitation for the free enjoyment of Emily's society under another roof. Try as he might, he could arrive at no more satisfactory conclusion than this. In his preoccupied state,

time passed quickly. Nearly an hour had elapsed before he rose to return to the house.

Entering the hall, he was startled by a cry of terror in a woman's voice, coming from the upper regions. At the same time Mr. Wyvil, passing along the bedroom corridor after leaving the music-room, was confronted by his daughter, hurrying out of Emily's bedchamber in such a state of alarm that she could hardly speak.

'Gone!' she cried, the moment she saw her father.

Mr. Wyvil took her in his arms and tried to compose her. 'Who has gone?' he asked.

'Emily! O, papa, Emily has left us! She has heard dreadful news—she told me so herself.'

'What news? How did she hear it?'

'I don't know how she heard it. I went back to the drawing-room to show her my roses—'

'Was she alone?'

'Yes! She frightened me—she seemed quite wild. She said, "Let me be by myself; I shall have to go home." She kissed me—and ran up to her room. O, I am such a fool! Anybody else would have taken care not to lose sight of her.'

'How long did you leave her by herself?'

'I can't say. I thought I would go and tell you. And then I got anxious about her, and knocked at her door, and looked into the room. Gone! gone!'

Mr. Wyvil rang the bell, and confided Cecilia to the care of her maid. Mirabel had already joined him in the corridor. They went down-stairs together, and consulted with Alban. He volunteered to make immediate inquiries at the railway-station. Mr. Wyvil followed him, as far as the lodge gate which opened on the high-

road—while Mirabel went to a second gate, at the opposite extremity of the park.

Mr. Wyvil obtained the first news of Emily. The lodge-keeper had seen her pass him, on her way out of the park, in the greatest haste. He had called after her, 'Anything wrong, Miss?'—and had received no reply. Asked what time had elapsed since this had happened, he was too confused to be able to answer with any certainty. He knew that she had taken the road which led to the station—and he knew no more.

Mr. Wyvil and Mirabel met again at the house, and instituted an examination of the servants. No further discoveries were made.

The question which occurred to everybody was suggested by the words which Cecilia had repeated to her father. Emily had said she had 'heard dreadful news'—how had that news reached her? The one postal delivery at Monks-moor was in the morning. Had any special messenger arrived, with a letter for Emily? The servants were absolutely certain that no such person had entered the house. The one remaining conclusion suggested that somebody must have communicated the evil tidings by word of mouth. But here again no evidence was to be obtained. No visitor had called during the day, and no new guests had arrived. Investigation was completely baffled.

Alban returned from the railway, with news of the fugitive.

He had reached the station, some time after the departure of the London train. The clerk at the office recognised his description of Emily, and stated that she had taken her ticket for London. The station-master had opened the carriage door for her, and had noticed that the young lady appeared to be very much agitated.

This information obtained, Alban had despatched a telegram to Emily in Cecilia's name: 'Pray send us a few words to relieve our anxiety, and let us know if we can be of any service to you.'

This was plainly all that could be done—but Cecilia was not satisfied. If her father had permitted it, she would have followed Emily. Alban comforted her. He apologised to Mr. Wyvil for shortening his visit, and announced his intention of travelling to London by the next train. 'We may renew our inquiries to some advantage,' he added, after hearing what had happened in his absence, 'if we can find out who was the last person who saw her, and spoke to her, before your daughter found her alone in the drawing-room. When I went out of the room, I left her with Miss de Sor.'

The maid who waited on Miss de Sor was sent for. Francine had been out, by herself, walking in the park. She was then in her room, changing her dress. On hearing of Emily's sudden departure, she had been (as the maid reported) 'much shocked, and quite at a loss to understand what it meant.'

Joining her friends a few minutes later, Francine presented, so far as personal appearance went, a strong contrast to the pale and anxious faces round her. She looked wonderfully well, after her walk. In other respects, she was in perfect harmony with the prevalent feeling. She expressed herself with the utmost propriety; her sympathy moved poor Cecilia to tears.

'I am sure, Miss de Sor, you will try to help us,' Mr. Wyvil began.

'With the greatest pleasure,' Francine answered.

'How long were you and Miss

Emily Brown together, after Mr. Morris left you?'

'Not more than a quarter of an hour, I should think.'

'Did anything remarkable occur in the course of conversation?'

'Nothing whatever.'

Alban interfered for the first time.

'Did you say anything,' he asked, 'which agitated or offended Miss Brown?'

'That's rather an extraordinary question,' Francine remarked.

'Have you no other answer to give?' Alban inquired.

'I answer—No!' she said, with a sudden outburst of anger.

There, the matter dropped. While she spoke in reply to Mr. Wyvil, Francine had confronted him without embarrassment. When Alban interposed, she never looked at him—except when he provoked her to anger. Did she remember that the man who was questioning her, was also the man who had suspected her of writing the anonymous letter? Alban was on his guard against himself, knowing how he disliked her. But the conviction in his own mind was not to be resisted. In some unimaginable way, Francine was associated with Emily's flight from the house.

The answer to the telegram sent from the railway-station had not arrived, when Alban took his departure for London. Cecilia's suspense began to grow unendurable; she looked to Mirabel for comfort, and found none. His office was to console, and his capacity for performing that office was notorious among his admirers; but he failed to present himself to advantage, when Mr. Wyvil's lovely daughter had need of his services. He was, in truth, too sincerely anxious and distressed to be capable of commanding his customary resources of ready-made

sentiment and fluently-pious philosophy. Emily's influence had awakened the only earnest and true feeling which had ever ennobled the popular preacher's life.

Towards evening, the long-expected telegram was received at

last. What could be said, under the circumstances, it said in these words:

'Safe at home—don't be uneasy about me—will write soon.'

With that promise they were, for the time, forced to be content.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

The Cottage.

CHAPTER XLIX.

EMILY SUFFERS.

MRS. ELLMOTHER—left in charge of Emily's place of abode, and feeling sensible of her lonely position from time to time—had just thought of trying the cheering influence of a cup of tea, when she heard a cab draw up at the cottage gate. A violent ring at the bell followed. She opened the door—and found Emily on the steps. One look at that dear and familiar face was enough for the old servant.

'God help us,' she cried, 'what's wrong now?'

Without a word of reply, Emily led the way into the bedchamber which had been the scene of Miss Letitia's death. Mrs. Ellmother hesitated on the threshold. 'Why do you bring me in here?' she asked.

'Why did you try to keep me out?' Emily answered.

'When did I try to keep you out, Miss?'

'When I came home from school, to nurse my aunt. Ah, you remember now! Is it true—I ask you here, where your old mistress died—is it true that my aunt deceived me about my father's death? And that you knew it?'

There was dead silence. Mrs. Ellmother trembled horribly—her lips dropped apart—her eyes

wandered round the room with a stare of idiotic terror. 'Is it her ghost tells you that?' she whispered. 'Where is her ghost? The room whirls round and round, Miss—and the air sings in my ears.'

Emily sprang forward to support her. She staggered to a chair, and lifted her great bony hands in wild entreaty. 'Don't frighten me,' she said. 'Stand back.'

Emily obeyed her. She dashed the cold sweat off her forehead. 'You were talking about your father's death just now,' she burst out, in desperate defiant tones. 'Your father died of heart complaint!'

'My father died murdered in the inn at Zeeland! All the long way to London, I have tried to doubt it. O me, I know it now!'

Answering in those words, she looked towards the bed. Harrowing remembrances of her aunt's delirious self-betrayal made the room unendurable to her. She ran out. The parlour door was open. Entering the room, she passed by a portrait of her father, which her aunt had hung on the wall over the fireplace. She threw herself on the sofa, and burst into a passionate fit of crying. 'O, my father—my dear gentle loving father; my first best truest friend—murdered! mur-

dered! O God, where was your justice, where was your mercy, when he died that dreadful death?

A hand was laid on her shoulder; a voice said to her, 'Hush, my child! God knows best.'

Emily looked up, and saw that Mrs. Ellmother had followed her. 'You poor old soul,' she said, suddenly remembering; 'I frightened you in the other room.'

'I have got over it, my dear. I am old; and I have lived a hard life. A hard life schools a person. I make no complaints; I learnt my lesson before you were born.' She stopped, and began to shudder again. 'Will you believe me if I tell you something?' she asked. 'I warned my self-willed mistress. Standing by your father's coffin, I warned her. Hide the truth as you may (I said), a time will come when our child will know what you are keeping from her now. One or both of us may live to see it. I am the one who has lived; no refuge in the grave for me. I want to hear about it—there's no fear of frightening or hurting me now—I want to hear how you found it out. Was it by accident, my dear? or did a person tell you?' Emily's mind was far away from Mrs. Ellmother. She rose from the sofa, with her hands held fast over her aching heart.

'The one duty of my life,' she said—'I am thinking of the one duty of my life. Look! I am calm now; I am resigned to my hard lot. Never, never again, can the dear memory of my father be what it was! From this time, it is the horrid memory of a crime. The crime has gone unpunished; the man has escaped others. He shall not escape me.' She paused, and looked at Mrs. Ellmother absently. 'What did you say just now? You want to hear how I know what I know? Naturally! naturally! Sit down here—sit down,

my old friend, on the sofa with me—and take your mind back to Netherwoods. Alban Morris—'

Mrs. Ellmother recoiled from Emily in dismay. 'Don't tell me he had anything to do with it! The kindest of men; the best of men!'

'The man of all men living who least deserves your good opinion or mine,' Emily answered sternly.

'You!' Mrs. Ellmother exclaimed, 'you say that!'

'I say it. He—who won on me to like him—he was in the conspiracy to deceive me; and you know it! He heard me talk of the newspaper story of the murder of my father—I say, he heard me talk of it composedly, talk of it carelessly, in the innocent belief that it was the murder of a stranger—and he never opened his lips to prevent that horrid profanation! He never even said, Speak of something else; I won't hear you. No more of him! God forbid I should ever see him again. No! Do what I told you. Carry your mind back to Netherwoods. One night, you let Francine de Sor frighten you. You ran away from her into the garden. Keep quiet! At your age, must I set you an example of self-control?'

'I want to know, Miss Emily, where Francine de Sor is now?'

'She is at the house in the country, which I have left.'

'Where does she go next, if you please? Back to Miss Ladd?'

'I suppose so. What interest have you in knowing where she goes next?'

'I won't interrupt you, Miss. It's true that I ran away into the garden. I can guess who followed me. How did she find her way to me and Mr. Morris, in the dark?'

'The smell of tobacco guided her—she knew who smoked—she

had seen him talking to you, on that very day—she followed the scent—she heard what you two said to each other—and she has repeated it to me. O, my old friend, the malice of a revengeful girl has enlightened me, when you, my nurse—and he, my lover—left me in the dark: it has told me how my father died!

'That's said bitterly, Miss!'

'Is it said truly?'

'No. It isn't said truly of myself. God knows you would never have been kept in the dark, if your aunt had listened to me. I begged and prayed—I went down on my knees to her—I warned her, as I told you just now. Must I tell *you* what a headstrong woman Miss Letitia was? She insisted. She put the choice before me of leaving her at once and for ever—or giving in. I wouldn't have given in to any other creature on the face of this earth. I am obstinate, as you have often told me. Well, your aunt's obstinacy beat mine; I was too fond of her to say No. Besides, if you ask me who was to blame in the first place, I tell you it wasn't your aunt; she was frightened into it.'

'Who frightened her?'

'Your godfather—the great London surgeon—he who was visiting in our house at the time.'

'Sir Richard?'

'Yes—Sir Richard. He said he wouldn't answer for the consequences, in the delicate state of your health, if we told you the truth. Ah, he had it all his own way after that. He went with Miss Letitia to the inquest; he won over the coroner and the newspaper men to his will; he kept your aunt's name out of the papers; he took charge of the coffin; he hired the undertaker and his men, strangers from London; he wrote the certificate—

who but he! Everybody was cap in hand to the famous man!'

'Surely, the servants and the neighbours asked questions?'

'Hundreds of questions! What did that matter to Sir Richard? They were like so many children, in *his* hands. And, mind you, the luck helped him. To begin with, there was the common name. Who was to pick out your poor father among the thousands of James Browns? Then, again, the house and lands went to the male heir, as they called him—the man your father quarrelled with in the bygone time. He brought his own establishment with him. Long before you got back from the friends you were staying with—don't you remember it?—we had cleared out of the house; we were miles and miles away; and the old servants were scattered abroad, finding new situations wherever they could. How could you suspect us? We had nothing to fear in that way; but my conscience pricked me. I made another attempt to prevail on Miss Letitia, when you had recovered your health. I said, "There's no fear of a relapse now; break it to her gently, but tell her the truth." No! Your aunt was too fond of you. She daunted me with dreadful fits of crying, when I tried to persuade her. And that wasn't the worst of it. She bade me remember what an excitable man your father was—she reminded me that the misery of your mother's death laid him low with brain fever—she said, "Emily takes after her father; I have heard you say it yourself; she has his constitution, and his sensitive nerves. Don't you know how she loved him—how she talks of him to this day? Who can tell (if we are not careful) what dreadful mischief we may do?" That was how my mistress

worked on me. I got infected with her fears; it was as if I had caught an infection of disease. O, my dear, blame me if it must be; but don't forget how I have suffered for it since! I was driven away from my dying mistress, in terror of what she might say, while you were watching at her bedside. I have lived in fear of what you might ask me—and have longed to go back to you—and have not had the courage to do it. Look at me now?

The poor woman tried to take out her handkerchief; her quivering hand helplessly entangled itself in her dress. 'I can't even dry my eyes,' she said faintly. 'Try to forgive me, Miss!'

Emily put her arms round the old nurse's neck, and kissed her.

For awhile, they were silent. Through the window that was open to the little garden, came the one sound that could be heard—the gentle trembling of leaves in the evening wind.

The silence was harshly broken by the bell at the cottage door. They both started.

Emily's heart beat fast. 'Who can it be?' she said.

Mrs. Ellmother rose. 'Shall I say you can't see anybody?' she asked, before leaving the room.

'Yes! yes!'

Emily heard the door opened—heard low voices in the passage. There was a momentary interval. Then, Mrs. Ellmother returned. She said nothing. Emily spoke to her.

'Is it a visitor?'

'Yes.'

'Have you said I can't see anybody?'

'I couldn't say it.'

'Why not?'

'Don't be hard on him, my dear. It's Mr. Alban Morris.'

CHAPTER L.

MISS LADD ADVISES.

Mrs. ELLMOTHER sat by the dying embers of the kitchen fire; thinking over the events of the day in perplexity and distress.

She had waited at the cottage door for a friendly word with Alban, after he had left Emily. The stern despair in his face warned her to let him go in silence. She had looked into the parlour next. Pale and cold, Emily lay on the sofa—sunk in helpless depression of body and mind. 'Don't speak to me,' she whispered; 'I am quite worn out.' It was but too plain, that the view of Alban's conduct which she had already expressed, was the view to which she had adhered at the interview between them. They had parted in grief—perhaps in anger—perhaps for ever. Mrs. Ellmother lifted Emily in compassionate silence, and carried her up-stairs, and waited by her until she slept.

In the still hours of the night, the thoughts of the faithful old servant—dwelling for awhile on past and present—advanced, by slow degrees, to consideration of the doubtful future. Measuring, to the best of her ability, the responsibility which had fallen on her, she felt that it was more than she could bear, or ought to bear, alone. To whom could she look for help?

Emily's friends at the country house were strangers to her. Doctor Allday was near at hand—but Emily had forbidden her to send for him. 'He will torment me with questions,' she said—'and I want to keep my mind quiet, if I can.' But one person was left, to whose ever-ready kindness Mrs. Ellmother could appeal—and that person was Miss Ladd.

It would have been easy to ask

the help of the good schoolmistress in comforting and advising the favourite pupil whom she loved. But Mrs. Ellmother had another object in view: she was determined that the cold-blooded cruelty of Emily's treacherous friend should not be allowed to triumph with impunity. If an ignorant old woman could do nothing else, she could tell the plain truth, and could leave Miss Ladd to decide whether such a person as Francine deserved to remain under her care.

To feel justified in taking this step was one thing: to put it all clearly in writing was another. After vainly making the attempt overnight, Mrs. Ellmother tore up her letter, and communicated with Miss Ladd by means of a telegraphic message, in the morning. 'Miss Emily is in great distress. I must not leave her. I have something besides to say to you which cannot be put into a letter. Will you please come to us?'

Later in the forenoon, Mrs. Ellmother was called to the door by the arrival of a visitor. The personal appearance of the stranger impressed her favourably. He was a handsome little gentleman; his manners were winning, and his voice was singularly pleasant to hear.

'I have come from Mr. Wyvil's house in the country,' he said; 'and I bring a letter from his daughter. May I take the opportunity of asking if Miss Emily is well?'

'Far from it, sir, I am sorry to say. She is so poorly that she keeps her bed.'

At this reply, the visitor's face revealed such sincere sympathy and regret, that Mrs. Ellmother was interested in him: she added a word more. 'My mistress has had a hard trial to bear, sir. I

hope there is no bad news for her in the young lady's letter.'

'On the contrary, there is news that she will be glad to hear—Miss Wyvil is coming here this evening. Will you excuse my asking if Miss Emily has had medical advice?'

'She won't hear of seeing the doctor, sir. He's a good friend of hers—and he lives close by. I am unfortunately alone in the house. If I could leave her, I would go at once and ask his advice.'

'Let me go!' Mirabel eagerly proposed.

Mrs. Ellmother's face brightened. 'That's kindly thought of, sir—if you don't mind the trouble.'

'My good lady, nothing is a trouble in your young mistress's service. Give me the doctor's name and address—and tell me what to say to him.'

'There's one thing you must be careful of,' Mrs. Ellmother answered. 'He mustn't come here, as if he had been sent for—she would refuse to see him.'

Mirabel understood her. 'I will not forget to caution him. Kindly tell Miss Emily I called—my name is Mirabel. I will return to-morrow.'

He hastened away on his errand—only to find that he had arrived too late. Doctor Allday had left London; called away to a serious case of illness. He was not expected to get back until late in the afternoon. Mirabel left a message, saying that he would return in the evening.

The next visitor who arrived at the cottage was the trusty friend, in whose generous nature Mrs. Ellmother had wisely placed confidence. No self-interested consideration had interfered with Miss Ladd's resolution to answer

the telegram in person, the moment she read it.

'If there is bad news,' she said, 'don't try to prepare me. Tell it at once, in the fewest words.'

'There is nothing that need alarm you, ma'am—but there is a great deal to say, before you see Miss Emily. My stupid head turns giddy with thinking of it. I hardly know where to begin.'

'Begin with Emily,' Miss Ladd suggested.

Mrs. Ellmother took the advice. She described Emily's unexpected arrival on the previous day; and she repeated what had passed between them afterwards. Miss Ladd's first impulse, when she had recovered her composure, was to go to Emily without waiting to hear more. Not presuming to stop her, Mrs. Ellmother ventured to put a question. 'Do you happen to have my telegram about you, ma'am?' Miss Ladd produced it. 'Will you please look at the last part of it again?'

Miss Ladd read the words: 'I have something besides to say to you which cannot be put into a letter.' She at once returned to her chair.

'Does what you have still to tell me refer to any person whom I know?' she said.

'It refers, ma'am, to Miss de Sor. I am afraid I shall distress you.'

'What did I say, when I came in?' Miss Ladd asked. 'Speak out plainly; and try—it's not easy, I know—but try to begin at the beginning.'

Mrs. Ellmother looked back through her memory of past events, and began by alluding to the feeling of curiosity which she had excited in Francine, on the day when Emily had made them known to one another. From this she advanced to the narrative of what had taken place at Nether-

woods—to the atrocious attempt to frighten her by means of the image of wax—to the discovery made by Francine in the garden at night—and to the circumstances under which that discovery had been communicated to Emily.

Miss Ladd's face reddened with indignation. 'Are you sure of all that you have said?' she asked.

'I am quite sure, ma'am. I hope I have not done wrong,' Mrs. Ellmother added simply, 'in telling you all this?'

'Wrong?' Miss Ladd repeated warmly. 'If that wretched girl has no defence to offer, she is a disgrace to my school—and I owe you a debt of gratitude for showing her to me in her true character. She shall return at once to Netherwoods; and she shall answer me to my entire satisfaction—or leave my house. What cruelty! what duplicity! In all my experience of girls, I have never met with the like of it. Let me go to my dear little Emily—and try to forget what I have heard.'

Mrs. Ellmother led the good lady to Emily's room—and, returning to the lower part of the house, went out into the garden. The mental effort that she had made had left its result in an aching head, and in an overpowering sense of depression. 'A mouthful of fresh air will revive me,' she thought.

The front garden and back garden at the cottage communicated with each other. Walking slowly round and round, Mrs. Ellmother heard footsteps on the road outside, which stopped at the gate. She looked through the grating, and discovered Alban Morris.

'Come in, sir!' she said, rejoiced to see him. He obeyed in silence. The full view of his face shocked Mrs. Ellmother. Never, in her experience of the friend

who had been so kind to her at Netherwoods, had he looked so old and so haggard as he looked now. 'O, Mr. Alban, I see how she has distressed you! Don't take her at her word. Keep a good heart, sir—young girls are never long together of the same mind.'

Alban gave her his hand. 'I mustn't speak about it,' he said. 'Silence helps me to bear my misfortune as becomes a man. I have had some hard blows in my time: they don't seem to have blunted my sense of feeling as I thought they had. Thank God, she doesn't know how she has made me suffer! I want to ask her pardon for having forgotten myself yesterday. I spoke roughly to her, at one time. No: I won't intrude on her; I have said I am sorry, in writing. Do you mind giving it to her? Good-bye—and thank you. I mustn't stay longer; Miss Ladd expects me at Netherwoods.'

'Miss Ladd is in the house, sir, at this moment.'

'Here, in London?'

'Up-stairs, with Miss Emily.'

'Up-stairs? Is Emily ill?'

'She is getting better, sir. Would you like to see Miss Ladd?'

'I should indeed! I have something to say to her—and time is of importance to me. May I wait in the garden?'

'Why not in the parlour, sir?'

'The parlour reminds me of happier days. In time, I may have courage enough to look at the room again. Not now.'

'If she doesn't make it up with that good man,' Mrs. Ellmother thought, on her way back to the house, 'my nurse-child is what I have never believed her to be yet—she's a fool.'

In half an hour more, Miss Ladd joined Alban on the little

plot of grass behind the cottage. 'I bring Emily's reply to your letter,' she said. 'Read it, before you speak to me.'

Alban read it: 'Don't suppose you have offended me—and be assured that I feel gratefully the tone in which your note is written. I try to write forbearingly on my side; I wish I could write acceptably as well. It is not to be done. I am as unable as ever to enter into your motives. You are not my relation; you were under no obligation of secrecy: you heard me speak ignorantly of the murder of my father, as if it had been the murder of a stranger—and yet you kept me—deliberately, cruelly kept me—deceived! The remembrance of it burns me like fire. I cannot—O, Alban, I cannot restore you to that place in my estimation which you have lost! If you wish to help me to bear my trouble, I entreat you not to write to me again.'

Alban offered the letter silently to Miss Ladd. She signed to him to keep it.

'I know what Emily has written,' she said; 'and I have told her, what I now tell you—she is wrong; in every way, wrong. It is the misfortune of her impetuous nature that she rushes to conclusions—and those conclusions once formed, she holds to them with all the strength of her character. In this matter, she has looked at her side of the question exclusively; she is blind to your side.'

'Not wilfully!' Alban interposed.

Miss Ladd looked at him with admiration. 'You defend Emily,' she said.

'I love her,' Alban answered.

Miss Ladd felt for him, as Mrs. Ellmother had felt for him. 'Trust to time, Mr. Morris,' she resumed. 'The danger to be afraid of is—the danger of some

headlong action, on her part in the interval. Who can say what the end may be, if she persists in her present way of thinking! There is something monstrous in a young girl declaring that it is *her* duty to pursue a murderer, and to bring him to justice! Don't you see it yourself?

Alban still defended Emily. 'It seems to me to be a natural impulse,' he said—'natural, and noble.'

'Noble?' Miss Ladd exclaimed.

'Yes—for it grows out of the love which has not died with her father's death.'

'Then you encourage her?'

'With my whole heart—if she would give me the opportunity!'

'We won't pursue the subject, Mr. Morris. I am told by Mrs. Ellmother that you have something to say to me. What is it?'

'I have to ask you,' Alban replied, 'to let me resign my situation at Netherwoods.'

Miss Ladd was not only surprised; she was also—a very rare thing with her—inclined to be suspicious. After what he had said of Emily, it occurred to her that Alban might be meditating some desperate project, with the hope of recovering his lost place in her favour.

'Have you heard of some better employment?' she asked.

'I have heard of no employment. My mind is not in a state to give the necessary attention to my pupils.'

'Is that your only reason for wishing to leave me?'

'It is one of my reasons.'

'The only one which you think it necessary to mention?'

'Yes.'

'I shall be sorry to lose you, Mr. Morris.'

'Believe me, Miss Ladd, I am not ungrateful for your kindness.'

'Will you let me, in all kind-

ness, say something more?' Miss Ladd answered. 'I don't intrude on your secrets—I only hope that you have no rash project in view.'

'I don't understand you, Miss Ladd.'

'Yes, Mr. Morris—you do.'

She shook hands with him—and went back to Emily.

CHAPTER LL

THE DOCTOR SEES.

ALBAN returned to Netherwoods—to continue his services, until another master could be found to take his place.

By a later train Miss Ladd followed him. Emily was too well aware of the importance of the mistress's presence to the well-being of the school, to permit her to remain at the cottage. It was understood that they were to correspond, and that Emily's room was waiting for her at Netherwoods, whenever she felt inclined to occupy it.

Mrs. Ellmother made the tea, that evening, earlier than usual. Being alone again with Emily, it struck her that she might take advantage of her position to say a word in Alban's favour. She had chosen her time unfortunately. The moment she pronounced the name, Emily checked her by a look, and spoke of another person—that person being, Miss Jethro.

Mrs. Ellmother at once entered her protest, in her own downright way. 'Whatever you do,' she said, 'don't go back to that! What does Miss Jethro matter to you?'

'I am more interested in her than you suppose—I happen to know why she left the school.'

'Begging your pardon, Miss, that's quite impossible!'

'She left the school,' Emily persisted, 'for a serious reason. Miss Ladd discovered that she had used false references.'

'Good Lord! who told you that?'

'You see I know it. I asked Miss Ladd how she got her information. She was bound by a promise never to mention the person's name. I didn't say it to her—but I may say it to you. I am afraid I have an idea of who the person was.'

'No,' Mrs. Ellmother obstinately asserted, 'you can't possibly know who it was! How should you know?'

'Do you wish me to repeat what I heard in that room opposite, when my aunt was dying?'

'Drop it, Miss Emily! For God's sake, drop it!'

'I can't drop it. It's dreadful to me to have suspicions of my aunt—and no better reason for them than what she said in a state of delirium. Tell me, if you love me, was it her wandering fancy? or was it the truth?'

'As I hope to be saved, Miss Emily, I can only guess as you do—I don't rightly know. My mistress trusted me half-way, as it were. I'm afraid I have a rough tongue of my own sometimes. I offended her—and from that time she kept her own counsel. What she did, she did in the dark, so far as I was concerned.'

'How did you offend her?'

'I shall be obliged to speak of your father if I tell you how.'

'Speak of him.'

'He was not to blame—mind that!' Mrs. Ellmother said earnestly. 'If I wasn't certain of what I say now, you wouldn't get a word out of me. Good harmless man—there's no denying it—he was in love with Miss Jethro! What's the matter?'

Emily was thinking of her memorable conversation with the disgraced teacher on her last night at school. 'Nothing,' she answered. 'Go on.'

'If he had not tried to keep it secret from us,' Mrs. Ellmother resumed, 'your aunt might never have taken it into her head that he was entangled in a love-affair of the shameful sort. I don't deny that I helped her in her inquiries; but it was only because I felt sure, from the first, that the more she discovered, the more certainly my master's innocence would show itself. He used to go away, and visit Miss Jethro privately. In the time when your aunt trusted me, we never could find out where. She made that discovery afterwards for herself (I can't tell you how long afterwards); and she spent money in employing mean wretches to pry into Miss Jethro's past life. She had (if you will excuse me for saying it) an old maid's hatred of the handsome young woman, who lured your father away from home, and set up a secret (in a manner of speaking) between her brother and herself. I won't tell you how we looked at letters and other things which he forgot to leave under lock and key. I will only say there was one bit, in a journal he kept, which made me ashamed of myself. I read it out to Miss Letitia: and I told her, in so many words, not to count any more on me. No; I haven't got a copy of the words—I can remember them without a copy. "Even if my religion did not forbid me to peril my soul by leading a life of sin with this woman whom I love"—that was how it began—"the thought of my daughter would keep me pure. No conduct of mine shall ever make me unworthy of my child's affection and respect." There! I'm making you cry; I won't stay here any longer. All that I had to say has been said. Nobody but Miss Ladd knows for certain whether your aunt was

innocent or guilty in the matter of Miss Jethro's disgrace. Please to excuse me; my work's waiting down-stairs.'

From time to time, as she pursued her domestic labours, Mrs. Ellmother thought of Mirabel. Hours on hours had passed—and the doctor had not appeared. Was he too busy to spare even a few minutes of his time? Or had the handsome little gentleman, after promising so fairly, failed to perform his errand? This last doubt wronged Mirabel. He had engaged to return to the doctor's house; and he kept his word.

Doctor Allday was at home again, and was seeing patients. Introduced in his turn, Mirabel had no reason to complain of his reception. At the same time, after he had stated the object of his visit, something odd began to show itself in the doctor's manner.

He looked at Mirabel with an appearance of uneasy curiosity; and he contrived an excuse for altering the visitor's position in the room, so that the light fell full on his face.

'I fancy I must have seen you,' the doctor said, 'at some former time.'

'I am ashamed to say I don't remember it,' Mirabel answered.

'Ah, very likely I'm wrong! I'll call on Miss Emily, sir, you may depend on it.'

Left in his consulting-room, Doctor Allday failed to ring the bell which summoned the next patient who was waiting for him. He took his diary from the table-drawer, and turned to the daily entries for the past month of July.

Arriving at the fifteenth day of the month, he glanced at the first lines of writing: 'A visit from a mysterious lady, calling herself Miss Jethro. Our conference led to some very unexpected results.'

No: that was not what he was in search of. He looked a little lower down; and read on regularly, from that point, as follows:

'Called on Miss Emily, in great anxiety about the discoveries which she might make among her aunt's papers. Papers all destroyed, thank God—except the handbill, offering a reward for discovery of the murderer, which she found in the scrap-book. Gave her back the handbill. Emily much surprised that the wretch should have escaped, with such a careful description of him circulated everywhere. She read the description aloud to me, in her nice clear voice: "Supposed age between twenty-five and thirty years. A well-made man of small stature. Fair complexion, delicate features, clear blue eyes. Hair light, and cut rather short. Clean shaven, with the exception of narrow half-whiskers"—and so on. Emily at a loss to understand how the fugitive could disguise himself. Reminded her that he could effectually disguise his head and face (with time to help him) by letting his hair grow long, and cultivating his beard. Emily not convinced, even by this self-evident view of the case. Changed the subject.'

The doctor put away his diary, and rang the bell.

'Curious,' he thought. 'That dandyfied little clergyman has certainly reminded me of my discussion with Emily, more than two months since. Was it his flowing hair, I wonder? or his splendid beard? Good God! suppose it should turn out—I'

He was interrupted by the appearance of his patient. Other ailing people followed. Doctor Allday's mind was professionally occupied for the rest of the evening.

(To be continued.)

A FORGOTTEN AMERICAN HUMOURIST.

'A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy.'—*Hamlet*.

TWENTY years ago, when all the rising generation of America were shouting with laughter over Artemus Ward's droll experiences, the worn copy of *Phœnixiana* from which the following extracts were taken was given to the writer of this article, with the remark that it was as well that the 'Showman's' admirers should know the source from which he drew his inspiration.

It is not always, nor perhaps even often, the case that what pleases us in youth can stand the test of the severer criticism of our riper years; but the audacious fun which brightens every page of *Phœnixiana* has in it the immortal quality: it is not for one age, but for all; and it beguiles way-worn men and women as readily to laughter now, as in the days when the toils and cares of life were unknown quantities in the sum of existence. Notwithstanding the great success which Artemus Ward obtained—notably in England, where, to the immense amusement of his compatriots, a glossary, explanatory of his peculiar terms, was published—notwithstanding the fact that he was deliciously funny, the few readers of *Phœnixiana* have seen no reason to modify the opinion formed on first reading its brilliant pages—that 'John Phœnix' was the prince of American jesters, and that his irresistible and original humour was the moving spring of the vast flood of 'native' humourists which has since diffused itself over the United States. An at-

tempt to define humour, even if such definition were within the writer's power, would not come within the scope of this article, and the distinction between English and American humour, though it has been a theme fruitful of discussion from many pens, is probably as far as ever from being defined to the satisfaction of everybody. But in one proposition it is probable that all English speaking and writing people would agree, namely, that to the Anglo-Saxon race belongs the jester's palm. There is no such fun as Anglo-Saxon fun, whether it be the broad loud jesting of the Briton, or the sly, quaint, half-hinted witticism of his Transatlantic cousin.

Perhaps the most salient difference between English and American humour lies in the fact that the American particularly enjoys a joke against himself, and retails it with peculiar grace and gusto; and this quality, observable in all American humourists, is one of the most marked characteristics of the writings of 'John Phœnix.'

'John Phœnix,' *alias* 'Squibob,' in private life Lieutenant George H. Derby, of the U.S. Topographical Engineers, graduated at West Point in 1846, having entered as a cadet in 1842. He is described as having been, at the time of his entrance, a remarkably tall and strong fellow for his age (sixteen), and equally mature mentally. He had seen much more of life—the worst side of it—than most boys of that age, and the

tone of his mind is said to have been profoundly injured by it. He was very ambitious; and a certain solid quality of mind which he possessed—a quality which adds a great deal to the splendour of his humour—combined with his quick intelligence to make him an admirable scholar, and, intellectually, one of the best men in his class. He was extravagantly fond of ‘sprees’ and of all manner of wild gaiety; but, as every ‘demerit’ counts at West Point, it behoved him to be very careful as to his behaviour in order to keep his place in the class, and it was probably for this reason only that his conduct was, in the main, good. One of his fellow-classmates describes him as having been ‘a *rara avis* among green youths.’ He had a good deal of *bonhomie*, and, while habitually grave and serious in appearance, was always bubbling over with fun and humour. He quickly became famous at West Point, no less for the fertility he displayed in inventing, and ingenuity in practising, the practical jokes in which his soul delighted, than for his clever sketches and caricatures, and his quickness of repartee. He possessed, too, a vast *répertoire* of stories, the nature of which, combined with the fact that he was much given to illustrating his text-books with marginal drawings of a very Juvenalesque character, drew upon him sharp reprimands and the deep disapproval of the professors. His passion for illustrating his text-books in this manner gave rise to a regulation, which still holds good at West Point, obliging the cadets to hand their text books to the professors for inspection on the first of every month. This regulation once afforded Derby an opportunity for a very clever practical joke; a joke which was so innocent, as well as

witty, that it was freely pardoned by the professor at whose expense it was committed. It occurred in this wise. The class was assembled in Professor d’O.’s room, and the lesson had already begun, when Professor d’O., interrupting himself, said suddenly,

‘Ah! it is the first of the month, I see. Gentlemen, hand me your text-books.’

There was a general move to obey the order on the part of all except Derby, who was observed to start violently, and hastily seizing his text-book, to thrust it into his desk. This, of course, did not pass unnoticed.

‘Mr. Derby,’ said Professor d’O. sternly, ‘hand me your text-book, sir.’

‘Could I be excused just this once, sir?’ faltered Derby.

‘Certainly not, sir,’ returned Professor d’O. severely. ‘Do you not remember that you are the principal cause of this regulation? It is your text-book I particularly want to see, Mr. Derby. Bring it to me at once, sir.’

‘But I had rather not, sir,’ hesitated Derby.

‘Perhaps so, sir,’ replied Professor d’O.; ‘but you must.’

Amid the profound silence and strained expectation of the whole class, Derby slowly walked up to the rostrum, and with elaborate reluctance yielded up his text-book. Behold! its pages were innocent of any illustration whatever, and the blank space above the opening chapter bore, in capital letters, the legend, ‘APRIL FOOL.’ It was the first of April, and, as we have said, the joke was forgiven.

Notwithstanding his brilliant qualities, Derby became so unpopular at West Point that during his last year there were only one or two rooms (among the first-class men) where he was tolerated. This was not because of

his powers of railleury or caricature, for the victims of both heartily forgave any fun at their expense, but rather because at that time he had very little sense of justice, honour, or decency in the perpetration of his jokes, and sooner or later alienated almost every one. In justice to him, it must be said that, in the indulgence of his humour, he would peril his own reputation and success as carelessly and readily as that of any other man; and as an illustration of this utter recklessness of consequences, it was long told at West Point how Derby, on the day he graduated, had the impudence to send a green cadet, whose duty it was to report to a cadet officer, straight into the awful presence of General the Military Superintendent, before whom, in the usual course of things, he would not have appeared officially for four years. The etiquette of West Point is, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, not to be infringed without fearful consequences, and in this instance there is no doubt that Derby would have been severely punished had the young cadet been allowed to reach General —'s presence. Fortunately, a compassionate bystander interfered, upon whom Derby turned in fury, saying that it was a 'pity that a fellow-classmate should spoil the last joke he was likely to perpetrate at West Point.'

'What an ass you are, Derby!' returned Lieutenant —, 'Don't you know that it would have been worse for you than for him?'

'That's so,' returned Derby, mollified. 'But I should have had my joke anyway,' he added, with regret.

In 1848 Derby was sent to California; and it was in California that he wrote and published the sketches which, collected in a volume, bear the title *Phœnixiana*.

Racy, humorous, and alive with stinging satire, they are tinged throughout with a local colouring, the truth of which will necessarily be less and less appreciated as years go on. For the California of thirty years ago has ceased to be so absolutely, that it is not easy even for an American to see the force of many an allusion which once contained a bitter, and it is to be feared too often a needed, shaft of satire. Derby is said to have led a life 'wilder than the wildest' during the first years of his residence in California, where his passion for practical jokes and reckless gaiety naturally had an almost unlimited scope. But after his marriage (in 1852) to a very good and lovely woman, he reformed entirely, and became in all respects a thoroughly estimable man. He had early become famous, and many of his brilliant bitter sayings have become household words in California, and fall daily from thousands of lips whose owners never heard of this prince of American jesters. There is a well-known incident which illustrates the profound confidence felt in his inexhaustible spring of humour, a confidence which was not misplaced, as the sequel shows.

Early in the year 1850, Derby was a passenger in a ship bound from New York to San Francisco. The voyage was to be 'round the Horn,' as Californians phrase it, and, therefore, necessarily an affair of months. The ship was crowded with passengers of both sexes, and of all ages and conditions; and the dismay of the captain and surgeon may be imagined when a case of cholera broke out in the steerage. It was genuine Asiatic cholera, over in a few hours; and when the victim, who, fortunately, perhaps, for his fellow-passengers, was friendless and unknown, had been committed to his 'vast and wander-

ing grave,' the captain, surgeon, and a cool-headed, kind-hearted United States officer, who alone, of the passengers, knew the nature of the dead man's illness, had a consultation as to what was to be done. All three agreed that it was imperatively necessary to keep the secret, and it was a case in which 'prevention' was the only hope. There was no cure for cholera, that was admitted; therefore it was not only indispensable to maintain a strict silence on the subject, but also, if possible, to keep the passengers from indulging in speculations or anxieties with regard to the dead man's illness.

But it is no easy matter to amuse several hundred people in mid-ocean so successfully that no room is left for restless or uneasy thoughts, and after long cogitation no safeguard against cholera had been found; when suddenly the captain sprang from his chair.

'I have it!' he cried. 'We'll get Derby to amuse them—for a "consideration."'

And then and there Derby was sent for, sworn to secrecy, and entrusted to take the responsibility of keeping the passengers amused and interested until they reached San Francisco. The 'consideration' which the captain felt himself justified in promising, on behalf of the owners of the ship, was something enormous, and Derby accepted the offer and the responsibility.

He performed his part of the bargain to perfection, and during the remaining weeks of the voyage kept every one on board in roars of laughter and in perfect health. The ship reached San Francisco in good condition, and without having lost any more passengers, and her owners gladly redeemed the promise made by the captain.

Great as was the strain upon his powers during this voyage, it

is said that he never once repeated himself, and never said anything that seemed forced or far-fetched, or uttered for effect. This will be easily credited by any one who reads *Phœnixiana*, a book in which each absurdity seems more delightful than the last. Take, for example, 'Phœnix's' engineering experiences in California, as given in his 'Official Report on the Central Route,' and observe at the outset with what a fine absence of nepotism he organises his corps.

'In a few days my arrangements were completed, and my scientific corps organised as follows:

John Phœnix, A.M., Principal Engineer and chief Astronomer.
Lieut. Minus Root, Apocryphal Engineers, First Assaist. Astronomer.
Lieut. Nonplus A. Zero, Hypercritical Engineers, Second Assaist. Astronomer.
Dr. Abraham Dunshunner, Geologist.
Dr. Targee Heavysterne, Naturalist.
Herr von der Weegates, Botanist.
Dr. Fagy L. Biggus, Ethnologist.
Dr. Tuskmaker, Dentist.
James Phœnix (my elder brother), Treasurer.
Joseph Phœnix (elder brother), Quartermaster.
William Phœnix (younger brother), Commissary.
Peter Phœnix (younger brother), Clerk.
Paul Phœnix (my cousin), Sutler.
Reuben Phœnix (my cousin), Wagon Master.
Richard Phœnix (second cousin), Assaist. Master.

'These gentlemen, with 184 labourers employed as teamsters, chainmen, rodmen, &c., made up the party. For instruments we had 1 large transit instrument (8-inch achromatic lens), 1 mural circle, 1 altitude and azimuth instrument (these instruments were permanently set up in a mule-cart, which was backed into the plane of the true meridian when required for use), 13 large theodolites, 13 small do., 8 transit compasses, 17 sextants, 34 artificial horizons, 1 sidereal clock, and 184 solar compasses. . . . Disliking to abandon our new line, which had been selected with much care and at great expense, I deter-

mined to employ in its measurement a reflecting instrument, used very successfully by the United States coast survey. I therefore directed my assistants to procure me a HELIOTROPE; but after being annoyed by having brought to me successively a sweet-smelling shrub of that name and a box of "Lubin's Extract" to select from, it was finally ascertained that no such instrument could be procured in California. In this extremity, I bethought myself of using as a substitute the flash of gunpowder. . . . Believing these experiments more curious than useful, I abandoned the use of the "heliotrope" or its substitutes, and determined to reverse the usual process, and arrive at the length of the base line by subsequent triangulation. I may as well state here that this course was adopted, and resulted to our entire satisfaction; the distance from Fort Point to Sancelito by the solution of a mean of 1,867,434,926,465 triangles being determined to be *exactly three hundred and twenty feet*. This result differed very much from our preconceived ideas and from the popular opinion, the distance being generally supposed to be some ten miles; but I will stake my professional reputation on the accuracy of our work, and there can, of course, be no disputing the elucidations of science, or facts demonstrated by mathematical process, however incredible they may appear *per se*.

'We had adopted an entirely new system of triangulation, which I am proud to claim (though with becoming modesty) as my own invention. It simply consists in placing one leg of a tripod on the initial point, and opening out the other legs as far as possible; the distance between the legs is then measured by a two-foot rule, and noted down, and the tripod moved, so as to form a second triangle

connected with the first, and so on, until the country to be triangulated has been entirely gone over. By using a large number of tripods, it is easily seen with what rapidity the work may be carried on; and this was, in fact, the object of my requisition for so large a number of solar compasses, the tripod being, in my opinion, the only useful portion of that absurd instrument.

Want of space compels the omission of the inimitable description which follows, in which the results of Phoenix's system are not always what he desires; of the novel mode of progression through the country, and the still more novel exploits of the scientific gentlemen attached to the expedition; but it is impossible not to quote another of Phoenix's inventions.

'I had made arrangements,' he continues, with majestic calm, 'to measure the length of Kearny Street by two methods: first, by chaining its side-walks; and secondly, by a little instrument of my invention called the "go-it-ometer." This last consists of a straight rod of brass, firmly strapped to a man's leg, and connected with a system of clockwork placed on his back, with which it performs, when he walks, the office of a *ballistic pendulum*. About one foot below the ornamental buttons on the man's back appears a dial-plate, connected with the clockwork, on which is promptly registered, by an index, each step taken. Of course, the length of the step being known, the distance passed over in a day may be obtained by a very simple process. . . . After seeing the camp properly arranged, the wheelbarrows parked, and a guard detailed, I sent for the chainmen and go-it-ometer bearer, to ascertain the distance travelled during the day.

'Judge of my surprise to find

that the chainmen, having received no instructions, had simply drawn the chain after them through the streets, and had no idea of the distance whatever. Turning from them in displeasure, I took from the go-it-ometer the number of paces marked, and, on working the distance, found it to be four miles and a half. Upon close questioning the bearer, William Boulder (called by his associates "Slippery Bill"), I ascertained that he had been in a saloon in the vicinity, and, after drinking five glasses (probably $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarts) of a beverage known among the natives as "Lager Bier," he had danced a little for their amusement. Feeling very much dissatisfied with the day's survey, I stepped out of the camp, and stopping an omnibus, asked the driver how far he thought it to the "Plaza." He replied, "Half a mile;" which I accordingly noted down, and returned very much pleased at having so easily obtained such valuable information. It would appear, therefore, that "Slippery Bill" had actually danced four miles in a few moments.

This fun is certainly audacious enough; but it pales before the examples given by Phoenix of the 'singular fertility' of Californian soil.

'The country in the vicinity of the route, after leaving Southwick's Pass, is very productive,' he observes. 'A building was pointed out to me near our line of march as the locale of a most astounding agricultural and architectural phenomenon, which illustrates the extreme fertility of the soil in a remarkable degree. A small pine wardrobe, which had been left standing by the side of the house (a frame cottage, with a piazza) at the commencement of the rainy season, took root, and in a few

weeks grew to the prodigious height of thirty feet, and, still preserving its proportions and characteristic appearance, extended in each direction, until it covered a space of ground some forty by twenty feet in measurement . . . and it now answers every purpose of an addition to the original cottage, being two stories in height!'

The remainder of this remarkable chapter is equally brilliant, and is embellished by some of the droll little sketches for which Derby was famous, and with which he was wont to eke out the expression of his thought. His 'Musical Review Extraordinary,' admirably witty as it is, is too long for quotation here, and too connected to admit of extracts. We proceed, therefore, to 'Phoenix's' *New System of English Grammar*. 'I have often thought,' he begins, 'that the adjectives of the English language were not sufficiently definite for the purposes of description. They have but three degrees of comparison—a very insufficient number certainly, when we consider that they are to be applied to a thousand objects, which, though of the same general class or quality, differ from each other by a thousand different shades or degrees of the same peculiarity. . . . To a man of a mathematical turn of mind, to a student and lover of the exact sciences, these inaccuracies of expression—this inability to understand *exactly* how things are—must be a constant source of annoyance; and to one who, like myself, unites this turn of mind to an ardent love of truth for its own sake, the reflection that the English language does not enable us to speak the truth with exactness is peculiarly painful. For this reason I have, with some trouble, made myself thoroughly acquainted with every ancient and modern language, in the hope that I

might find some one of them that would enable me to express precisely my ideas; but the same insufficiency of adjectives exists in all except that of the Flathead Indians of Puget Sound, which consists of but forty-six words, mostly nouns, but to the constant use of which exists the objection that nobody but that tribe can understand it; and as their literary and scientific advancement is not such as to make a residence among them for a man of my disposition desirable, I have abandoned the use of their language, in the belief that for me it is *hyas cultus*, or, as the Spaniard hath it, *no me vale nada*.

Despairing, therefore, of making new discoveries in foreign languages, I have set myself seriously to work to reform our own, and have, I think, made an important discovery, which, when developed into a system and universally adopted, will give a precision of expression, and a consequent clearness of ideas, that will leave little to be desired, and will, I modestly hope, immortalise my humble name as the promulgator of the truth and the benefactor of the human race. Before entering upon my system, I will give you an account of its discovery, which will surprise you by its simplicity. . . . During the past week my attention was attracted by a large placard embellishing the corners of our street, headed in mighty capitals with the word PERENOLOGY, and illustrated by the map of a man's head, closely shaven, and laid off in lots, duly numbered from one to forty-seven. Beneath this edifying illustration appeared a legend, informing the inhabitants of San Diego and vicinity that Professor Dodge had arrived, and taken rooms (which was inaccurate, as he had but one room) at the Gyascutus House, where he would be happy to examine and

furnish them with a chart of their heads, showing the moral and intellectual endowments, at the low price of three dollars each.

Always gratified with an opportunity of spending my money and making scientific researches, I immediately had my hair cut and carefully combed, and hastened to present myself and my head to the professor's notice. I found him a tall and thin professor, in a suit of rusty, not to say seedy, black, with a closely-buttoned vest, and no perceptible collar or wristbands; he wore a brown wig, beneath which, as I subsequently ascertained, his bald head was laid off in lots, marked and numbered with Indian ink, after the manner of the diagram upon his advertisement. Upon a small table lay many little books with yellow covers, several of the placards, pen and ink, a pair of iron callipers with brass knobs, and six dollars in silver. Having explained the object of my visit, . . . the professor placed me in a chair, and, seizing the callipers, he embraced with them my head in various places, and made notes upon a small card that lay near him on the table. He then stated that my "hair was getting very thin on the top," placed in my hand one of the yellow-covered books, which I found to be an almanac containing anecdotes about the virtues of Dodge's Hair Invigorator, and, recommending it to my perusal, he remarked that he was agent for the sale of this wonderful fluid, and urged me to purchase a bottle—price two dollars. Stating my willingness to do so, the professor produced it from a hair trunk which stood in a corner of the room, which he stated, by the way, was originally only a pine box; on which the hair had grown since the "Invigorator" had been placed in it (a singular fact), and recom-

mended me to be cautious in wearing gloves while rubbing it upon my head, as unhappy accidents had occurred—the hair growing freely from the ends of the fingers if used with the bare hand. He then seated himself at the table, and, rapidly filling up what appeared to me a blank certificate, he soon handed over the following singular document:

'Phrenological chart of the head of Mr. John Phoenix, by Flatbroke B. Dodge, Professor of Phrenology, and inventor and proprietor of Dodge's celebrated Hair Invigorator, Stimulator of the Conscience, and Arouser of the Mental Faculties:

Temperament—Lymphatic, Nervous,
Bilious.

Size of head	11
Amativeness	11½
Caution	3
Combativity	2½
Credulity	1
Causality	12
Conscientiousness	12
Destructiveness	9
Hope	10
Imitation	11
Self-esteem	5
Benevolence	12
Mirth	1
Language	12
Firmness	2
Veneration	12
Philoprogenitiveness	0

Having gazed on this for a few moments in mute astonishment, I turned to the professor, and requested an explanation. "Why," said he, "it's very simple: the number 12 is the maximum, 1 the minimum. For instance, you are as benevolent as a man can be; therefore I mark you Benevolence 12. You have little or no self-esteem—½; you have scarcely any credulity. Don't you see?"

'I did see! This was my discovery. I saw at a flash how the English language was susceptible of improvement, and, fired with the glorious idea, I rushed from the room and the house, heedless of the professor's request that I would buy more of his Invigorator, heedless of his alarmed cry that I would pay for the bottle I'd got,

heedless that I tripped on the last step of the Gyasentus House, and smashed there the precious fluid (the step has now a growth of four inches of hair on it, and the people use it as a door-mat). I rushed home, and never grew calm till, with pen, ink, and paper before me, I commenced the development of my system.

'This system—shall I say this great system?—is exceedingly simple, and easily explained in a few words. In the first place, "figures won't lie." Let us then represent by the number 100, the maximum, the *ne plus ultra* of every human quality—grace, beauty, courage, strength, wisdom, learning—everything. Let *perfection*, I say, be represented by 100, and an absolute minimum of all qualities by the number 1. Then, by applying the numbers between to the adjectives used in conversation, we shall be able to arrive at a very close approximation to the idea we wish to convey; in other words, we shall be enabled to speak the truth. Glorious, soul-inspiring idea! For instance, the most ordinary question asked of you is, "How do you do?" To this, instead of replying, "Pretty well," or the like absurdities, after running through your mind that *perfection* of health is 100, no health at all, 1, you say with a graceful bow, "Thank you, I am 52 to-day;" or, feeling poorly, "I'm 13, I'm obliged to you." . . . Do you see in this way how closely you may approximate to the truth, and how clearly your questioner will understand what he so anxiously wishes to arrive at—your *exact* state of health?

'Let this system be adopted into our elements of grammar, our conversation, our literature, and we become at once an exact, precise, mathematical, truth-telling people. It will apply to everything but

politics; there, truth being of no account, the system is useless. But in literature how admirable! Take an example.

'As a 19 (young) and 76 (beautiful) lady was 52 (gaily) tripping down the side-walk of an 84 (unfrequent) street, she came in contact 100—this shows that she came into close contact—with a 73 (fat) but 87 (good-humoured looking) gentleman, who was 93 (*i.e.* intently) gazing into the window of a toy-shop. (Gracefully) 56 extricating herself, she received the excuse of the 96 (embarrassed) Falstaff with a 68 (bland) smile, and continued on her way. But (hardly) 7 had she reached the corner of the block, ere she was overtaken by a 24 (young) man, 32 (poorly) dressed, but of an 85 expression of countenance. 91 (hastily) touching her 54 (beautifully-rounded) arm, said, to her 67 surprise,

"Madam, at the window of the toy-shop yonder you dropped this bracelet, which I had the 71 (good) fortune to observe; and now have the 94 happiness to hand to you."

'Blushing with 76 modesty, the 76 (lovely) lady took the bracelet . . . and 84 (hesitatingly) drew forth her portemonnaie. The young man noticed the action, and 73 (proudly) drawing back, added,

"Do not thank me: the pleasure of gazing for an instant at those 100 eyes," . . . and so forth. This is only the commencement of a pretty little tale, culminating in the happiness of the lovers, which is represented by 100, and which illustrates Mr. Phoenix's system of English grammar to perfection.

'You would hardly believe it,' he goes on to say, with a naive appeal to the sympathy of his readers, 'but that everlasting (100) scamp of a professor has brought a suit against me for

stealing a bottle of his disgusting Invigorator; and as the suit comes off before a justice of the peace, whose only principle of law is to find guilty and fine any accused person whom he thinks has any money . . . it behoves me to take time by the forelock. Should my system succeed to the extent of my hopes and expectations, I shall publish my new grammar early in the ensuing month.

'P.S.—I regret to add that, having read the above article to Mrs. Phoenix, and asked her opinion thereon, she replied "that if a first-rate magazine article were represented by 100, she should judge this to be about 13; or if the quintessence of stupidity were 100, she should take this to be in the neighbourhood of 96."

'This, as a criticism, is perhaps a little discouraging; but, as an exemplification of the merits of my system, it is exceedingly flattering. How could she, I should like to know, in ordinary language, have given so *exact* and truthful an idea, how expressed so forcibly her opinion (which of course differs from mine), on the subject?"

Nothing daunted by Mrs. Phoenix's disapprobation, however, Phoenix next launches boldly forth into the realms of science; and the 'Lectures on Astronomy' are unsurpassed, if not unequalled, by anything in the *Phoenixiana*.

'By the wondrous discoveries of the improved telescopes of modern times, we ascertain that upwards of several hundred millions of stars exist that are invisible to the naked eye, the nearest of which is millions of millions of miles from the earth; and, as we have every reason to suppose that every one of this inconceivable number of worlds is peopled like our own, a consideration of this fact, and that we are undoubtedly as superior to these beings as we

are to the rest of mankind, is calculated to fill the mind of the American with a due sense of his own importance in the scale of animated creation. . . . The demonstration of the system in all its perfection was left to Isaac Newton, an English philosopher, who, seeing an apple tumble down from a tree, was led to think thereon with such gravity that he finally discovered the attraction of gravitation, which proved to be the great law of Nature that keeps everything in its place. Thus we see that as an apple originally brought sin and ignorance into the world, the same fruit proved thereafter the cause of vast knowledge and enlightenment; and, indeed, we may doubt whether any other fruit but an apple, and a sour one at that, would have produced these great results; for, had the fallen fruit been a pear, an orange, or a peach, there is little doubt that Newton would have eaten it up, and thought no more on the subject.'

This is delightfully impertinent; but Mr. Phoenix's characteristic coolness is even more superbly manifested as he soars higher and higher among the celestial spheres. After favouring his readers with some highly original remarks upon the sun, he goes on to say:

'Sacred history informs us that a distinguished military man, named Joshua, once caused the sun to "stand still;" how he did it is not mentioned. There can, of course, be no doubt of the fact that he arrested its progress, and possibly caused it to "stand still;" but translators are not always perfectly accurate, and we are inclined to the opinion that it might have wiggled a very little when Joshua was not looking directly at it. The statement, however, does not appear so very incredible, when we reflect that seafaring men are in

the habit of actually bringing *the sun down* to the horizon every day at 12 meridian. This they effect by means of a tool made of brass, glass, and silver, called a sextant.'

After some further observations on the sun, Phoenix proceeds to the examination of the planetary system, and in winding up his remarks on Mercury he observes, with not unnatural asperity:

'The difficulty of communication with Mercury will probably prevent its ever being selected as a military post, though it possesses many advantages for that purpose, being extremely inaccessible, inconvenient, and, doubtless, singularly uncomfortable. It received its name from the god Mercury, in the heathen mythology, who is the patron and tutelary divinity of San Diego County. . . . Venus, in mythology, was a goddess of singular beauty, who became the wife of Vulcan, the blacksmith, and, we regret to add, behaved in a most immoral manner after her marriage. The celebrated case of Vulcan *versus* Mars, and the consequent scandal, is probably still fresh in the minds of our readers. . . . Venus still remains the goddess of beauty, and not a few of her *protégées* may be found in California.

'The earth, or, as the Latins called it, Tellus (from which originated the expression, "do tell us"), is the third planet in the solar system, and the one on which we subsist, with all our important joys and sorrows. The *San Diego Herald* is published weekly on this planet, for five dollars per annum, payable invariably in advance. . . . To the inhabitants of Jupiter our important globe appears like a small star of the fourth or fifth magnitude. We recollect some years ago gazing with astonishment upon the inhabitants of a drop of water,

developed by the solar microscope, and secretly wondering whether they were or were not reasoning beings, with souls to be saved. It is not altogether a pleasant reflection that a highly scientific inhabitant of Jupiter, armed with a telescope of, to us, inconceivable form, may be pursuing a similar course of inquiry, and indulging in similar speculations regarding our earth and its inhabitants. . . . A little reflection on these subjects leads to the opinion that the death of an individual man on this earth, though, perhaps, as important an event as can occur to himself, is calculated to cause no great convulsion of Nature, or disturb particularly the great aggregate of created beings.

'The earth moves round the sun from west to east in a year, and turns on its axis in a day. . . . Supposing the earth to be suddenly arrested on its axis, we all—men, women, children, horses, cattle and sheep, donkeys, editors, and members of Congress—with all our goods and chattels, would be thrown off into the air at a speed of 173 miles a minute, every mother's son of us describing the arc of a parabola, which is probably the only description we should ever be able to give of the affair.

'This catastrophe, to one sufficiently collected to enjoy it, would doubtless be exceedingly amusing; but as there would probably be no time for laughing, we pray that it may not occur until after our demise, when, should it take place, our monument will probably accompany the movement. . . . Science is yet but in its infancy; with its growth, new discoveries of an astounding nature will doubtless be made, among which, probably, will be some method by which the course of the earth may be altered, and it be steered with the same ease and regularity

through space and among the stars as a steamboat is now directed through the water. It will be a very interesting spectacle to see the earth "rounding to" with her head to the air, off Jupiter, while the Moon is sent off laden with mails and passengers for that planet, to bring back the return mails, and a large party of rowdy Jupiterians going to attend a grand prize-fight in the ring of Saturn.'

After some further remarks upon the earth, Phoenix proceeds to the description of the Moon.

'This resplendent luminary, like an omnibus, is occasionally full, and new. . . . Up to the latest dates from the Atlantic States, no one has succeeded in reaching the Moon. Should any one do so hereafter, it will probably be a woman, as the sex will never cease making an effort for this purpose as long as there is a man in it. . . . Upon the whole, we may consider the Moon an excellent institution; and it is a blessed thing to reflect that the President of the United States cannot *veto* it, however strong an inclination he may feel, from principle or habit, to do so.'

Two more extracts from *Phoenixiana* and we have done. Derby's passion for practical jokes, even if they involved his own risk and injury, has already been mentioned. The most original and daring practical joke he ever indulged in was during the early part of his residence in California, when the editor of the *San Diego Herald* (a democratic organ) committed his paper to Derby's hands during his absence in San Francisco. The paper was published, as usual, weekly; but the editor's horror and indignation may be imagined when he discovered that Derby had coolly changed the politics of the paper, and that the *San Diego Herald*, which had

been an uncompromising ally of the democracy, was now no less vehement and active on the other side! The fact that this occurred in the midst of a stirring political campaign added insult to injury. Two of the most brilliantly-witty chapters in *Phœnixiana* are devoted to Phœnix's editorial exploits, and pretend to give extracts from the *San Diego Herald* as he conducted it, and to embody his peculiar views of an editor's duty—views which, if adopted, would, it need scarcely be said, produce an entire revolution in journalism. It is at the close of the second chapter that the 'fight' occurs, which Artemus Ward transferred almost verbally to his own pages, and which is one of the wittiest things in his book. In *Phœnixiana* it is headed

'INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE EDITOR
AND PHŒNIX.

'A rumour had reached our ears that the editor had arrived. Public anxiety had been excited to the highest pitch to witness the result of the meeting between us. It had been stated publicly that he would whip us the moment he arrived; but though we thought a conflict probable, we had never been very sanguine as to its terminating in this manner. Coolly we gazed from the window of the office upon the New Town road. We descried a cloud of dust in the distance; high above it waved a whip-lash, and we said the editor cometh, and "his driving is like that of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he driveth furiously." Calmly we seated ourselves in the "armchair," and continued our labours upon our magnificent Pictorial. Anon a step, a heavy step, was heard upon the stairs, and the editor stood before us.

'We rose, and, with an unfaltering voice, said, "Well, how do

you do!" He made no reply, but commenced taking off his coat.

'We removed ours, also our cravat.

'The sixth and last round is described by the pressmen and compositors as having been fearfully scientific. We held the editor down over the press by our nose (which we had inserted between his teeth for that purpose), and while our hair was employed in holding one of his hands, we held the other in our left, and with the "sheep's-foot" brandished above our head, shouted to him, "Say Waldo" (the Whig candidate). "Never!" he gasped. At this moment we discovered that we had been labouring under a misunderstanding.

'We write this while sitting without any clothing, except our left stocking, and the rim of our hat encircling our neck like a "ruff" of the Elizabethan era, that article of dress having been knocked over our head at an early stage of the proceedings, and the crown subsequently torn off; while the editor is sopping his eye with cold water in the next room, a small boy standing beside the sufferer with a basin, and glancing with interest over the advertisements on the second page of the *San Diego Herald*, a fair copy of which was struck off upon the back of his shirt at the time we held him over the press.'

Derby rarely noticed any attacks made upon him in the newspapers, saying that 'where impudence is wit, 'tis folly to reply.' He was in his grave when Artemus Ward was at the zenith of his fame, so that the unblushing act of plagiarism above alluded to passed quite unnoticed. Should another edition of *Phœnixiana* ever be published, it will be seen that Artemus Ward was

not the only American humourist who owes his inspiration to *Phœnixiana*, and who has systematically neglected to refer to that delightful volume.

With Phœnix's description of the devices of office-seekers as practised in California in 1848-50-55, the list of extracts must be brought to a conclusion. As a specimen of his splendid powers of exaggeration and *reductio ad absurdum*, the 'Inauguration of the New Collector,' and another chapter entitled 'Return of the Collector,' are among the best efforts of his genius.

'Passing up Montgomery Street yesterday afternoon, my attention was attracted by a little gentleman with a small moustache, who rushed hastily past me. Though slightly lame, he had passed me with a speed that may have been equalled, but for a man of his size could never have been excelled; and his look of frantic terror, his countenance wild, pallid with apprehension, as I caught for an instant his horror-stricken gaze, I shall never forget. I had turned partly around to watch his flight, when with a sudden shock I was borne hurriedly along, and in an instant found myself struggling and plunging in the midst of a mighty crowd who were evidently in hot pursuit. . . . There was no shouting—a look of stern and gloomy determination sat on the countenance of each individual; and, save an occasional muttered ejaculation of "There he goes!" "I see him!" we rushed on in horrid silence.'

'A sickly feeling came over me as the conviction that I was in the midst of the far-famed and dreaded Vigilance Committee settled on my mind; here was I borne along with them, an involuntary and unwilling member. . . . It was a dreadful scene. I am not a fat man—that is, not particularly fat—but

an old villain with a bald head and spectacles punched me in the abdomen; I lost my breath, closed my eyes, and remember nothing further. On recovering my faculties, I found myself jammed up flat against a box, with my head protruding over the top in a most uncomfortable manner, and the weight of the whole crowd (amounting by this time to some six thousand) pressed against me, keeping me inextricably in my position. Here, for an instant, I caught a glimpse of a Stockton boat just leaving the wharf; then everything was obscured by a sudden shower of something white and there burst from the mob a deep and melancholy howl, prolonged, terrific, hideous. . . . "In the name of Heaven," I gasped, "what is this?" "He has escaped," replied a seedy individual, with a deep groan. "What has he done?" said I. "Who is the criminal?" "Done!" said he of the seedy garments, turning moodily away, "nothing—it is the new Collector! He's off to Stockton." The crowd dispersed. . . . I looked over the side of the wharf. I am not given to exaggeration. You will believe me when I tell you that the sea was white with letters that had been thrown by that crowd; for miles it was white with them, and far out in the stream, her wheels filled with letter-paper, her shafts clogged with dissolving wafers, lay the Stockton boat. On her upper deck, in frenzied agony, danced the pilot, his hand grasping his shattered jaw. An office-seeker had thrown a letter attached to a stone, which had dislodged four of his front teeth. . . . I walked up the wharf, and gazed ruefully on my torn clothing and shattered boots, which had suffered much in this struggle of democracy. "Thank God, O Phœnix," said

I, "that you are a fool—or what amounts to the same thing in these times, a Whig—and have no office to dispense, and none to seek for."

This is delicious, but the 'Return of the Collector' is not inferior in interest.

'Intelligence having reached the city yesterday morning that the new Collector might be expected by the Stockton boat, at an early hour in the afternoon the crowd of office-seekers began to assemble, and by eight o'clock last evening the Long Wharf was so densely packed with human beings, that merchants and others compelled to resort thither were obliged to step from the corner of Montgomery and Commercial Streets upon the heads of the crowd, and proceed to their places of business over a living pavement. Much suffering having been caused by the passage of loaded drays and other carriages over the shoulders of the crowd, and many serious accidents having occurred to individuals, our worthy mayor, ever alive to the calls of humanity, throwing aside all political prejudice, caused planks to be laid over the heads of the assembly from Sansome Street to the extremity of the wharf, which in a great measure alleviated their suffering. There was no fighting or disorder, for so closely was the crowd packed that no man could move a finger; one unfortunate individual, who at an early stage of the proceedings had inadvertently raised his arm above his head, remained with it for hours immutably fixed in that position. . . . At half-past nine an electric shock ran through the vast assemblage at the sound of the steamboat's bell. . . . The Collector disembarked, and in a few moments a procession was formed and proceeded in the following order to the hotel:

'THE NEW COLLECTOR

In a carriage drawn by two horses lashed to their utmost speed.

'All the male inhabitants (except one reckless and despairing old Whig) running eight abreast at the top of their speed.

'THE POLICE OF SAN FRANCISCO,

'*One dead run, and much blown.*

'Candidates for office in the Custom House who had known the Collector in his early youth, ten abreast, bearing a banner with the following motto, "Don't you remember the path where we met, long, long ago?"

'Candidates for office who had lately become acquainted with the Collector, twelve abreast. Banner, "We saw him but a moment, but methinks we've got him now."

'Candidates who fervently wished to the Lord they could get acquainted with him.

'Candidates who had frequently heard of him, forty-five abreast.

'All the members of the Democratic party in California who did not wish for an office in the Custom House, consisting of one fortunate miner who had made his pile, and was going home on the first of the month.

'Gentlemen who had the promise of appointments from influential friends, and were sure of getting them. . . . This part of the procession was four hours in passing a given point. . . .

'Saturday morning, P.S.—"Truthful James" has just rushed up in a frantic state to inform me that the Collector did not arrive last night after all. . . . I do not know that it makes any difference. If he did arrive, my report is all true now; if he did not, why, when he *does* arrive it will be all true then. Of course you won't publish this.

'PHOENIX.'

One wonders what Phoenix

U

would have had to say had he lived to see Garfield persecuted by office-seekers.

Not long after the publication of these sketches in 1855, Lieut. Derby was attacked by a disease of the eyes, which caused him such acute agony that his brain was at times slightly affected, and the closing years of his life were clouded and saddened.

He died in California in 1860, at an age (thirty-four) when it might reasonably have been hoped that the best work of his life remained still to be done, adding by his death another example to the many with which literary history teems of 'how quick bright things come to confusion.'

MRS. LAUNT THOMPSON.

NOTE.—The writer's thanks are due to Generals — and —, and Major —, of the U.S. Army, for the personal information contained in this article.

SONNET.

(From the Italian of Petrarca.)

In thought I was carried through heavenly space,

Seeking the love I mourn here in vain.

Gazing enraptured, I saw her again,

But fairer in virtue, more lovely in grace.

Bright was the light that illumined her face,

When taking my hand she bade me regain

The life I was losing in anguish and pain.

Methought she thus spake: 'In this holy place

My soul awaits yours; then wherefore this haste

To loosen the fetters that bind you to earth?

O, leave not the bark of your life on the strand!

Those pitiful words, so pure and so chaste,

Had kept me in heaven by their power and worth.

Ah, why did she gently relinquish my hand?

WALTER GURNER.

AT LOCH-NA-CLAVER.

IN self-justification, if on no other ground, I pen these words after returning to London from my last angling trip to the north. I was persuaded by Stanforth, my once intimate friend, to accompany him, on that occasion, far beyond our former limits of travel—the English lakes, or Lochleven, at the farthest—and to visit one of the most outlandish parts of the kingdom. When Stanforth first planned it—for it is he who was originally responsible for the proposal—and suggested, in that off-hand way of his I now dislike so much, that we should go to the Outer Hebrides that year, and get some ‘rough loch-fishing,’ as he called it, I confess to have been taken with the idea. He had been in the islands some years before, and between his rather highly-coloured reminiscences of the place, and the various allusions to Hebridean scenery I consulted in literature, from Boswell to Black, I contrived, before starting, to picture to myself a purely ideal island of the western main, lying in a perpetual summer calm. If my prospective vision had an imaginary coral reef encircling it and some tropical palms thrown in as a make-weight, I can only plead a highly imaginative faculty as an excuse. I know better now. Stanforth called the sport we were about to enjoy ‘rough loch-fishing.’ He was right: it was rough, the roughest sport imaginable.

We went to Oban by rail, thence by steamer to Loch-na-Claver, our head-quarters, a port of call for the Highland steamer, and fronting the Minch on the

eastern shore of one of the central islands.

A more abominable cross-sea than is to be found between Mull and Skye perhaps exists nowhere else on our coasts. At this stage of our journey, at all events, I, who have voyaged abroad, and usually boast of my staying powers on shipboard, became suddenly and exceedingly poorly. The way in which that steamer pitched and rolled off Loch-na-Claver Heads, with no wind blowing at all, was extraordinary. I had missed all the Skye scenery on the way, through sheer inability to look at it; and now, as we lurched and tossed off the entrance to the harbour, the bare treeless coast of the island we approached danced up and down before my swimming eyesight in a dizzy reel.

‘O to be ashore!’ I moaned, lying limp and helpless on the skylight of the quarter-deck.

‘In about an hour,’ shouted Stanforth in my ear. I am not deaf, and his voice was unnecessarily loud. ‘Why,’ continued he, in cheerful rollicking accents, as of a Channel pilot, ‘I thought you were never unwell at sea. All right, old fellow, we’ll be in shortly, and you will be quite snug in the inn.’

‘Is—is the hotel—the inn, I mean—near the pier where we land?’ I stammered.

‘Quite close,’ he replied; ‘only there isn’t any pier, at least not at ebb tide. We shall go ashore in a boat.’

Perhaps it was this suggestion that provoked a fresh ‘sea-change’ on my part. At all events I be-

came again very poorly, and after that remember nothing distinctly till I found myself, with the help of Stanforth's arm, picking my way over some very slippery rocks on the shore, then up a sandy ascent, and finally lying on a sofa in a diminutive inn-parlour, feebly asking for brandy. That much-needed stimulant was a long time on the way. The house we were in did not possess the necessary license, and all excisable liquors were purveyed by a companion establishment half a mile distant. The liquid also, when fetched, proved to be of an exceedingly fiery and ardent description. I wished my flask had been filled with 'Martell' at Oban.

But I recovered in the course of the evening, had a stroll in front of the inn, and saw the light of the setting sun on the hills of Skye. A short survey also revealed that the township of Loch-na-Claver consisted of some thirty stone houses close to the rocky and broken shore, widely apart from each other, and every one of them apparently approached by a road of its own. Nothing to be seen to landward; the interior of our island was hidden by low rounded hills, rising immediately behind the houses.

'Thousands of lochs over there to the westward,' bawled Stanforth at my side—he is speaking louder than ever since we came. 'Off at seven sharp to-morrow morning, and try a dozen of them. Let's see how we stand for top-joints, and look over that big fly-book of yours. And, I say, look here,' he continued (*crescendo*), 'try if you can find that cake of "Pears" in your portmanteau. I'm out of that kind, and it will be needed for stockings to-morrow.'

That pellucid soap-tablet! I never see even its advertisement

now without a shudder. Applied externally as a precaution against blistered feet, it was always inquired for in advance of some peculiarly distressing and lengthy tramp in the interior.

Now, I am an angler. I pride myself on my proficiency in the nice details of the craft, and on my Waltonian appreciation of its poetic and meditative charms. But there are limits to the pursuit of sport, and I never could see that a stiff daily walk of twelve or fifteen miles, over broken peat-bogs, stony wildernesses, and long heather, preceding any wetting of our flies, added in any way to the enjoyment of the day's sport. It was pure chance-work, this wandering so far afield. The local advice which prompted it was often singularly deceptive. We had to find our own lochs and then to fish them, and the more remote waters were not necessarily the finest for angling. Severe pedestrian effort is not in any way connected with fly-fishing. The two things are quite distinct. And here, by the way, one has no boat in which to lounge while the flies are on the water, or when the fish are 'off the take.' All angling has to be done from the shore, wading being often impracticable or unprofitable. From one to another of the jutting points of these endless loch shores, the fisherman patiently plods over mud, stones, and peat-moss, or picks his way, heron-like, through the shallow marshy swamps and pools.

I would fain instead have meditatively angled in the numerous lochs near our head-quarters, or within some reasonable distance, but my companion was inexorable. 'Never would forgive myself, my dear fellow,' he would say, 'if I had a large basketful inland and you weren't there! Now, this

was not altogether unselfish on his part. There is a great deal of human nature revealed in the company of anglers like Stanforth. For my own was certainly the more carefully-selected and abundant fly-book. It was always convenient for him to have me and my book at hand, that he might borrow a 'red spinner' or 'one or two of these gray creepers' from my store. So, with hope in our hearts and soap in our stockings, we seemed to penetrate the recesses of the island farther and farther every day, sometimes keeping by the hilly roads for miles, and then branching off by interminable loch shores, losing our way among their windings, and trudging painfully, single file, along the sheep-tracks of the hills. Sometimes the sport was good, at other times but indifferent, and the variety of loch and stream was so exhaustless that we often changed our route with small advantage. From what I know of these watery solitudes, I would confidently allow to any one ten years of successive labour as the least time in which to qualify as an angler's guide to the locality. And two years more might be added wherein to explore the hill streams.

If only Stanforth had been less exacting, or even a trifle less enthusiastic! But he was always determined to reach 'that loch,' of which he had been told the night before by some of the natives—some wonderful water with a Gaelic name of ten syllables. Sometimes we never found it, even with the aid of the Ordnance map. If only I could have remained nearer home, and rested on the heather, instead of ceaselessly flogging the water, how I would have given myself up to the enjoyment of the scenery!

For this island grows upon the visitor every day. I think of it often now. With all its utter loneliness, its saddened, winding loch shores and misty hills, there is a spell about this region which few will escape. It has a restfulness of its own, owing, perhaps, to the treeless and watery character of the scenery. For, in the solitudes between the central hill ranges—pathless wilds unbroken by a single dwelling, and the haunt only of deer and sheep—there is nothing to indicate anything but calm, even when a gale may be blowing to seaward. Only the gleaming surface of the lakes is then fretted with ripples. And yet, from the *sound* of the sea—from its unseen presence—there is no escape. Every part of the land is 'within hearing of the wave.' The monotone of the Atlantic surge haunts it throughout, while nothing is visible in the inner valleys but rounded grassy hills, some broken craggy heights, and the inevitable gleam of the winding loch stretching for miles.

Sometimes one longs to read the riddle of this enchanted ground, with a glimpse of the calling deeps beyond, and, climbing one of the heathery hills, and looking westward, sees, far away in dim haze, and unbroken by land to Labrador, the Atlantic meeting the skyline between the loom of St. Kilda to the north-west and Barra to the south.

Stanforth is quite a Gallio in his indifference to the beautiful and the grand. He says I always stop to admire the scenery when out of breath with walking, and wishful of an excuse for delay. Sometimes I wish that I had never accompanied him; at others, I wish that I had come alone. The only respect in which Stanforth is indispensable is in the interpretation of Gaelic, to which lan-

guage I am a comparative stranger. His knowledge of this extraordinary tongue—almost nothing else is spoken here—is, however, limited to phrases he has picked up travelling in the Highlands. His family connections, I believe, are partly Celtic, but this, of course, does not help him much. Sometimes the natives do not understand him, and then he roars at them, as if they were deaf. One day, when he was addressing one of the inhabitants (out of window, too, for he hails them as if they were passing ships) in this forcible style, I told him to give the man he spoke to ‘less of the sound, and more of the idiom, of the language.’ Strange! he was very sulky for the rest of the day, and, in fact, was only mollified by an addition I made to his store of tackle of some of my very finest angling gut.

August was close at hand. We had been more than three weeks in the island. The yellow trout were so gorged with natural fly, by day and night, that they would scarcely rise at all to our flies; or, if they did so, it was only with a lazy swirl, careless whether they seized the lure or not. It was too early for the sea-trout by more than a month. Our sport was consequently poor. Altogether we were not in the best of humour. The primitive arrangements of the commissariat at the inn pall upon one after a little. Mutton and herrings were our staple food. And there was a continual profusion of tea.

One extremely warm day, I felt so knocked up with heat, fatigue, and the attacks of innumerable midges, that, coming to a halt in the course of our usual hill ramble—about five miles from the inn—I frankly told my companion of my intention not to proceed farther that day. If he wished to go on, he might. I would lounge

about, and either go home alone, or wait for his return. After all, he took it coolly. Some self-assertion on my part might have saved me some toilsome journeys earlier in our stay. He persuaded me to remain where we parted, in case I might not find my way back among the mazes of the lochs. If I would not stray far from the spot, he would not fail to meet me on his return, in three or four hours at most. So it was arranged. ‘And, by the way’—this as if by afterthought—he came back a little way to say it, ‘would I let him have some of these floating ichneumons from my book? they might be useful farther inland.’ Glad to be left alone at any sacrifice, I pressed my whole stock of that alluring artificial insect upon his acceptance. Pocketing them, he moved away. I sank restfully upon a clump of heather by the loch-side, and composed myself for a lengthened rest. ‘Don’t go far away,’ shouted my companion as he left me; ‘you can fish anywhere about.’ The rest of his words I failed to catch.

‘You might safely offer me a sovereign for every trout I capture in your absence,’ thought I. ‘Shall I sleep, or not?’ was my next reflection. Impossible, perhaps, because of these confounded midges. Exposure to sun and wind, and the attacks of these pests, had tanned my complexion to a dark mahogany tint, relieved with blisters. No; sleep was out of the question; rest and meditation alone were left. Meditation, however, for more than two hours at a stretch, without a book or magazine at hand, always becomes irksome to my mind, even with immunity from midge-bites. As it happened, long before that time had passed, my attention was aroused by a sudden ‘swirling’ rise in the water of the loch a

few yards from the bank on which I rested.

A large fish undoubtedly, to judge by the circling eddy spreading slowly in the water—larger than the ordinary yellow two-pounders. Could it be an early sea-trout come up the streams to the loch? What a joke it would be to show Stanforth a fresh-run silvery beauty when he returned weary, and probably with an empty basket!

I cautiously approached the water's edge, after putting on a heavier fly-cast. Up to this time I had scarcely glanced at the general appearance of the loch. It seemed much the same as any other of the scores of waters we had passed on the way—a long, narrow, irregular-looking loch, lying east and west, and trending in both directions out of sight. We had approached it on the northern shore. Standing on a jutting point of rocks, I cast my flies long and carefully round the spot where I had seen the rise. Yes, there it was again—a billowy turn in the water, then a glimpse of silvery side. But the fish did not touch the flies, and slowly sank again. Large, no doubt; perhaps six or seven pounds, by the glance I had of it. Provokingly enough, it might not show again. In the most approved fashion, I waited for some time, and then tried another long succession of casts. All in vain. These fresh-run fish are both shy and wild, and the light was rather strong on the water. When on the point of reeling up, not a little disappointed, a most unaccountable phenomenon took place right before my eyes, but on the other side of the loch, about a hundred yards away, and close into the bank of the farther shore. About half a dozen large fish leaped simultaneously out of

the water. In all my experience of sea-trout, I had never before seen the like. So closely did they jump together, that it seemed as if they were urged by some hidden agency under the surface. Immediately afterwards, the same surprising feat was repeated; this time, nearly a dozen silvery five-pounders, I should think, flashed in the sun. Looking closely also, I could see, even at this distance, that the water near the other shore heaved and swayed as if rippled by a large shoal. They usually ascend in great numbers, these sea-trout. What more likely than that this loch has some communication with the sea to the eastward by burn or stream, and that the first shoal has ascended? They frequently did so before the time, I had been informed, often returning again to salt-water. Was it possible to get to the other side? for sign of other rise on my bank there was none.

The loch was evidently too deep to attempt wading, even if I had had waders with me. The only other plan was to endeavour to find either end of the loch, and make the circuit, carefully marking the exact spot on the shore I left with a cairn of stones. The westward direction seemed to promise the shorter walk, though the undulating shores hid both ends from view.

Off I started, the prospect of possible magnificent sport—for what tyro could fail with a shoal of sea-trout among which to cast!—urging on my steps. The windings of that shore were extraordinary. Half an hour's stiff walking—an hour's—only showed me fresh stretches of water before me. That I was going westward was evident, but my knowledge of that part of the interior was limited. For all I knew, this might be that endless 'Loch Fada'

of the island, the queen of its waters in loveliness:

'With all its fairy crowds
Of islands, that together lie
As quietly as spots of sky
Among the evening clouds.

Beautiful, but a perfect labyrinth, with miles upon miles of indented shores.

At last, to my great relief, the loch narrowed—not to an ending in a sandy bay, but to a kind of strait, across which lay some rude boulders as stepping-stones, marking a ford or crossing-place. Of course, after crossing there, the other side up to the spot I had marked still remained to be traversed. It was exceedingly warm, and the track by the shore, over heather and loose shingle, a wearisome one. But I pushed on. Did Stanforth return, he would only find me on the other side of the loch—the better side too. Doubtless we could meet going homeward at the other end. Whose basket would hold the heaviest fish? With my rod—fortunately, I uniformly carry a good grilse one, good to twenty pounds—and picked tackle, I had little doubt of securing one or two in such a splendid 'shore run' of fish.

Arrived opposite my cairn, I carefully reconnoitred, and, from a convenient pier-like row of stones extending into the water, fished long and carefully. The day was bright, but heavy clouds were sweeping the hill-sides, and I cast between the glints of sunshine. My gear was strong, but showed not in the water. No success; not so much as a fresh rise, even standing on the farthest stone. A change of flies might do wonders. Stooping down at the very extremity of the stony point, I looked over my most alluring designs.

While crouching in this posi-

tion, my feet resting on the surface of a not very firm stone, I was surprised to find myself aware of a distinct rustling noise and pulling movement immediately behind me, as if of some one lightly touching the lid of my fishing-basket, and opening it. Turning suddenly round, and rising to an erect position at the same moment, I narrowly escaped falling headlong into the deep water before me; for, close behind me, actually standing on the same stone as myself, was—what I do not now hesitate to call—a remarkably good-looking young woman. By her quickly-withdrawn hand, it was plain that she had been examining the interior of my basket. Recovering my balance with some difficulty—a performance which evidently amused the fair stranger—I managed to turn and confront her. Evidently one of the peasant class, she seemed to be about nineteen, and was dressed in the ordinary garb of a crofter's daughter. She was smiling still: a very pretty smile it was, though at my expense, and I am afraid it disarmed that indignation which an angler justifiably feels when a stranger looks into his basket without leave. It was evidently done in all innocence.

'Well, my good girl,' I said, recovering from my surprise, 'do you know if there are many large trout in this loch?'

She laughed a pretty rippling laugh.

'No English,' she said, and shook her head.

'No English?' queried I, not knowing well what to say. 'And you see I have no Gaelic, so I daresay we can't speak much to each other.'

'No, sir.'

She answered in Gaelic this time; at least, I guessed as much.

She had stepped backwards to the stone next to me, perhaps in shyness, and was looking down into the water at her feet. The bright tartan shawl she wore over her head half concealed her features, as her face was downcast; but as she stood there, and dipped one rosy foot into the rippling water at her side, it was evident that this barefooted peasant-girl, who had tripped so noiselessly behind me as I was fishing, had much of the quiet beauty of her native island; something also, perhaps, of its witchery. At all events, I, who am a bachelor, and have not a little constitutional timidity in feminine society, began to wish that Stanforth would not return to find me alone with such an interesting companion. Where did she come from? I wondered; and when would she go away? But she showed no sign of doing that.

'Where do you live, my good girl?' I said, trying Stanforth's plan of speaking loudly in an unknown tongue. She must have understood me, for she pointed over the hills to the southward. 'And your name?'

'Sheila MhicDhomhnuill' (*Anglicè*, Julia McDonald), she answered.

How the long Gaelic surname trilled from her lips! Really, I thought, it will be very embarrassing if she doesn't go away. If Stanforth returns, he will be certain to chaff me unmercifully.

Just at this moment a tremendous plunging fling close to my flies, on the part of a fish about a foot and a half in length, distracted my attention. It didn't appear to leap at the flies, but, as it were, alongside of them. Totally unlike, in fact, any rise I ever saw. And there was no second take! Turning round in disgust, it was very plain to me that the girl was much amused;

in fact, she laughed outright, though at what I could not divine. Perhaps she thought me an inexperienced angler. Certainly appearances were against me. 'No good!' she managed to say in English, after she had regained her gravity. As my efforts, indeed, seemed to fall under that description, I could say nothing in contradiction; and though I never in my life had seen a loch boiling with fish, apparently not one of which seemed to care for the fly, I resolved to wait a little longer. Evidently the girl intended to wait for results also; for though there was an air of shyness about her, curiosity on her part seemed to prevail, and she showed no signs of departing.

While shifting some of my flies I had to face my companion, and though we could not converse, I had an opportunity of observing her more closely. Hers was not the ordinary Hebridean type of beauty. But there are two races in these islands: the one with the dark, slavish Celtic countenance predominates; the other with the Norse complexion is by far the less frequent. This girl was of the type of those who came 'from Norrway over the saut sea faem.' Indistinct, perhaps, in repose, the moving plastic features of the Northman's race are as widely different from those of the Celt as a living breathing countenance from a mask of stone: touch it with emotion, and it melts and breathes and burns in every lineament. It changes momentarily with every varying mood and passion, as glances the vivid plumage of the dove's neck. It is speech without words. As I looked up into her face, and her eyes—violet in the sunlight, deep blue in the shadow—lighted up her delicate fair

complexion, just tinged with sunburn, and her slight aquiline features, one waving lock of hair, dull shimmering gold, escaped from its covering, and fluttered in the wind.

By my watch, Stanforth had been absent four hours. He could not be much longer.

Once it seemed as if she were going away. Looking round while fishing, I saw that she had noiselessly tripped ashore, and was walking lightly on the strand. A moment later, and she returned, and stood close to me again. Embarrassing, certainly! I resumed my fruitless task. A string of Gaelic words from my companion made me turn. She pointed to the westward hills, and by some broken English and her signs I could understand she wished me to accompany her thither. A better loch, perhaps, thought I; out of sight of Stanforth, too, when he returned. I would go with pleasure.

Sheila led the way—fortunately it was in quite the opposite direction from that in which I expected my friend to return. How she tripped along! I could hardly keep up with her nimble steps, as her *petite* but rounded figure went before me. Sometimes she smilingly waited for me. We chose the soft grassy sheep-tracks, out and in among the heather, for the sake of her pretty bare feet. So much for meditating beside these haunted lakes. I, Guy Effingham, of the Middle Temple, footing it over the Hebridean hills, and wandering into a perfectly unknown region with a laughing siren of a girl-guide! The way didn't seem long, and I felt a singular apathy as to keeping tryst with Stanforth.

Windings of lochs interminable! Alone, it was perfectly out of the

question that I could find my way home. We went together farther and farther into the recesses of the hills. Then at one turning of the long fairy lake, the shores of which we traversed, the landscape opened out. Immediately before us, as we stood still for a moment, stretched a boundless chain of water, lake beyond lake, lying at the base of a huge abrupt cliff to the south. On the other hand, a grassy slope, sheep-dotted, descending to the water's edge, and, at the top of the slope, a tiny cottage, with the blue filmy peat-smoke rising from it in curls. From the girl I gathered that it was her home. We went to the shore of the loch together. She pointed out some rocky points on the shore as good fishing-places, turned to me with a laughing smile, and ran to the house like a young fawn. Would she return? was my thought while I meditatively arranged my tackle. If she did not, I was certainly in danger of losing my way in returning. Meanwhile it might be well to try the loch.

If the fish were smaller here than their deceptive fellows in the former loch, they certainly were in better taking humour. It was not long before I basketed a round half-dozen of yellow trout. While I was casting, I saw, looking behind me, that an elderly man had issued from the cottage, and was coming over the greensward towards me—Sheila's father, perhaps. He came slowly, near my point. As long as I continued casting, he remained still. When reeling up he came near, and, touching his bonnet, saluted me in fair English, and inquired if I had had any sport. It was a famed loch this, it seemed, but the light rather strong upon it. Would I come to his house up there, and have some refreshment?

So, with a fair half-basket on my shoulders, we went up together towards the cottage.

'It was your daughter, I suppose, that kindly showed me this loch?' I queried.

'O yes,' replied he—James, it seemed, his name was, James McDonald—'Sheila knows all the locha.'

And all the sport to be had in them, I presumed.

'You are welcome,' said he, as, with that inimitable untaught Highland courtesy, he made way for me to enter his dwelling. It was a neat whitewashed cottage, with a little garden enclosed in front, and some beds of flowers. A small croft lying round it occupied McDonald and his son, and they had a boat at Loch-na-Claver for the summer fishing. The harvest of the sea had been poor lately, he told me, and not paying; but the crops on the croft had been fair. 'Huinish' the little farm was called, with some subtle Gaelic harmony intertwined with the pronunciation. There really *was* some melody in the language, undiscovered by me till then.

'By the bye, my friend,' said I, as I seated myself by the fire-side, 'how does it happen that the sea-trout are up stream so early in the loch at which I met your daughter?' At first he could not understand me. Then Sheila, who came in, and was far shyer in the house than before, explained to her father—in Gaelic, of course. My question seemed to afford them some amusement. My host went out without remark, then returned, bearing some large flat things like boards upon his shoulder. These he flung on the floor before me. Shade of Walton! they were dried split fish; hard, coarse, gray-looking; very like the fish that had risen

so freely in the loch, but as certainly not trout.

'Estremon'—mullet, gray mullet, explained he.

'But in fresh water!' exclaimed I dubiously.

'Not fresh,' replied he, pitching the dried fish in a corner. 'Salt; or at least brackish—the tide comes up there.'

'The tide?' queried I, bewildered.

'Yes,' he answered, 'the Minch tide from the eastward—it's rising flood there now, where you fished at first. When you go back, we shall row you down some miles in our boat.'

And I, most sportsmanlike of anglers, had been fishing for hours in a tidal stream for a fish that never takes any lure, and is only captured by an elaborate system of triple nets!* They did laugh, but it was not like Stanforth's ridicule. The laughing of some people doesn't hurt. At all events Sheila's didn't, as it rippled and died away and came again, whenever we touched on the mullet question. I never cared less about going home, seeming never to tire of conversing with Sheila's father, with Sheila for a listener. By the way, why should she listen so attentively if she didn't know English? As for Stanforth, I never thought of him once.

It was late before I took the road again, with the old man and his daughter for guides, for the tidal shore. They had a boat hauled up, among the long heather, on the banks. The

* Shoals of these fish infest the tidal estuaries of the islands. In appearance they are not unlike sea-trout. An old book on the Hebrides describes them as 'speckled salmon,' and recommends several lures for their capture. It is found, however, that they do not take the hook, and are with difficulty netted, owing to their habit of leaping in a body from the water. They are coarse eating, and when taken are frequently used as manure.

water was heavily swollen with the tide. I was to be landed some miles up, and from that point it was an easy walk to the inn. Sheila stepped on board first, and seized the oars.

'Jump in, sir,' said McDonald, 'and good-night.' (He was not coming.) 'Sheila is quite used to it, and will row you up. Good-night, and come back again soon.'

Before I knew, the boat was pushed off into the swirling flood, the girl rowing steadily up stream, but avoiding the central current. I insisted, of course, on taking the oars, or at least one of them, made an attempt with one, caught a crab at once, and desisted. Nothing to do but sit in the stern face to face with Sheila, as she pulled by the shore edges, and the dusk began to fall as we made way down the reaches. I really hoped we should see nothing of Stanforth. He must have gone home long ere this.

I wished my fair companion to land me after a little, and return ere it got dark; but she would not hear of it. The best part of an hour's rowing, and she pulled in for an outlying ledge of rocks, where the stream was broad but not rapid, the force of the flood being past. Then I saw the lights of Loch-na-Claver. How could I thank Sheila! I had enough wisdom to discern that any direct reward would wound. It always does with the better class of the people here. So when we pulled in for the shore, and she rested on the oars, I stepped forward, shook her frank outstretched hand, and thanked her. She looked up and smiled; her warm breath fanned my face. Then her eyes fell, and she played with the oar.

'Good-night, and come back soon,' half English, half her own native speech.

'Yes, I will; good-night, Sheila!'

Then I stood on the shore, and saw her go swiftly down the tide, the oars scarcely dipping. It was dream-like to be landed thus, and to be so quickly left. Another minute, and boat and rower faded to a speck on the dim water, then turned a point and disappeared. Her words were in my ears long after I lost sight of her: 'Come back soon again!' My way lay across the heather in the purple evening; the winds were laid, and the only sound was that sweet farewell in my ears, and far away the roar of the east tide turning to ebb.

I never felt, generally speaking, in a more outwardly hardened and defiant mood than when entering our inn. Even Stanforth was amazed at my new-born hardihood.

'Where *had* I been?'

I gave him little satisfaction. Never mentioned Huinish, or having met anybody. Only I had strayed from the agreed place of meeting; had gone a long way round; and—well, was here, as he might see!

'Yellow trout, by Jove!' shouted Stanforth as he pounced on and opened my basket. 'Why, these must have been caught in Loch Aival! Where on earth have you been, and how did you come back? Across the ford, when it is high water?'

I might have brazened it out, and, in fact, did; but I was sorely put to it at length, for, in taking out the contents of the basket, we discovered (what was unknown to me till then) on the top of the basket, and separated from the trout by a dainty layer of rushes, wild flowers, and sweet heather, a neatly tied-up bunch of white lilies, the same as I had seen in front of the cottage at Huinish.

Then I refused all explanations, and demanded a solution of the supper question instead. Stanforth became cold and suspicious from that hour. Pretty Sheila!

The following morning I felt slightly fatigued, not to say indisposed. At least I said as much, and, to Stanforth's disgust, professed my utter inability to indicate to him the precise loch in which the yellow trout had been captured. It was quite true: I could never have pointed it out. So I declared my intention of remaining indoors 'to write letters,' Stanforth, meanwhile, setting out on one of his endless tramps inland. His basket the day before had been but a poor one, and he was very sulky. On one point I had made up my mind—never to go to Huinish in his company. Would I ever go there again, and alone—ever try to see Sheila once more?

My letters finished, and my friend still absent, I strolled to the post-office—a pretentious stone building not far from the inn. When I entered, the postmaster was looking over some letters for another applicant, and I waited till he was disengaged. It was a girl who stood beside me at the counter, but I did not see her face when I entered, and, while stamping my own correspondence, she slipped out. When I left the office she was posting a letter at the window. It was Sheila! She was much shyer than I had yet seen her; indeed, if I had not recognised her she might have passed without noticing me. But her kindness was not to be so soon forgotten, and we walked down the road together. Her boat was at the loch shore, it seemed, where I had been landed last night, and I could not do less than go to see her leave. She wore a little coquettish hat to-day,

and was evidently dressed for visiting Loch-na-Claver. Past the inn we walked together—much to the secret edification of mine host, apparently—and struck off by the heathery paths leading to the upland lochs.

I was to come back to Huinish soon, she said; that is, her father told her to say so, did she chance to see me—this in sweet confusion.

It was wonderful how her acquaintance with English had increased since first we met. O Sheila! that 'no English' of yours was but shyness, I thought.

'And get some more yellow trout when I come?' hazarded I.

'Yes,' she replied, with a roguish smile; 'and try the mullet again?'

Colin, it seemed, could show me other and far better lochs.

'Colin—who was he?'

It seemed he was her brother, the fisherman, who had been from home yesterday.

'Yes, Colin was the one who knew the lochs best.'

'I don't think I should come so far unless you promised to guide me.'

'Why not, if Colin knew them better?'

'Just as you know English better to-day than yesterday?' queried I.

O, the Board school English was all she had! As if that made any difference! and as if I could not understand her even in Gaelic! I fear we were a very long time in reaching that boat. At last we found it. I would only push it off (as if she could not have done it unaided!) if I might go a little way along with her, and be landed farther up. So we embarked together. It was my turn this time. I was to be permitted to row, as the tide favoured us. Had there only been

a sail the oars would not have been needed. How pretty she was with that scarlet flush upon her cheeks and her eyes sparkling! A mile—a mile and half we went. At last I really must go ashore, and pulled accordingly for the nearest point.

I was just saying good-bye—perhaps for the second or third time—and telling her, also with repetition, that I really would remember her—her father's invitation, and come to Huinish again to try the yellow—yes, the yellow—trout again, when perhaps Colin, or, far better, if only *you*—

That sentence was never finished, for just at this moment Stanforth, with that lazy lounging swagger of his, and fishing-rod over his shoulder, came round the nearest point, a few yards from us. Sheila had taken the oars by this time; they were resting on the rowlocks, and she was keeping them down with one hand while holding the other to me on the shore, when he came upon us all at once.

'Good-bye,' I said to Sheila, stooping, and gently pushing off the boat, 'good-bye,' and she dipped her oars, and rowed straight for the centre of the stream.

I took no notice of Stanforth, but stood watching her till she was out of hearing. Then I turned and joined him. We walked together down the loch shore, silent for a minute or two, both of us.

'Ahem! your friend of the ford, I presume?' he said.

'Yes,' I replied, 'my friend of the ford.'

'Perhaps the lady of the lilies as well?' he suggested alliteratively again. 'It certainly is a better day for writing letters than for angling; yet, strange to say, I have a fair basket.'

I did not pursue the subject.

It would never do to go to Huinish with Stanforth, after all. Not even, I mentally added, if Colin were to show him all the lochs in one direction, and Sheila to be my guide in the other. The island was beginning to be much too small for us.

Shortly afterwards it became rather too wet for us before any farther inland trips could be arranged, and leaving Huinish unvisited. What is called in these parts 'the Lammas flood' set in, or rather broke out, upon us, and flooded stream and loch to such an extent that angling became impracticable. Our island became a great dismal swamp in three days, during which period we were prisoners in the inn, and Stanforth's Gaelic became limited to the imprecatory epithets of that copious language.

We arranged to go. The steamer, however, did not suit. We must travel by the sailing mail-packet to Skye, thence by Portree and Strome Ferry south. This packet, plying between Dunalein in Skye and Loch-na-Claver, is erratic in its movements and uncertain in its hours. It seems, during summer, to sail day and night, to keep the island supplied with mails. One whole day we waited its coming, despaired of it, and finally gave up hopes of it till morning. During the night, however, I was aroused by a tremendous hubbub, both inside of the house and outside, a perfect Babel of voices, Gaelic particularly audible outside. Pushing open the casement, I inquired of a passer-by, in the dim morning light, what was the matter. 'Pagh-ket!' he screamed, in two syllables.

An early and unexpected start; but there was no help for it, and, after a hurried breakfast, Stanforth and I embarked at the pier.

She was a well-built quick sailing vessel, and, with a favouring breeze, swept down the bay, passed the Heads, and entered the Minch. Farewell to Loch-na-Claver, as we sighted the Skye hills tinted with the coming dawn!

There were several passengers on board with us, but the stowing of our luggage in a handy place for landing took us some time, and we were fairly in the Minch before I had leisure to stroll on deck. There was a stretch of open deck aft, and a small dismal cabin also, which few cared to enter as the weather was fine. Stanforth and I had yet a coolness between us, and our stroll up and down was a separate one. The morning was chilly, and every one muffled up. Anxious to learn some particulars of the Skye land we were approaching, I turned and spoke to a young man standing beside me. His companion, a young girl, was close behind him. I asked him some questions, which he civilly answered, and, just as I moved away, after thanking him, the girl turned her head. Sheila it certainly was! It was her brother, the Colin aforesaid, she laughingly explained, who was going south from Dunalein with his fishing-smack to Oban and Corran Ferry, and she had been sent with him to transact some business at Dunalein and then return.

I thought she smiled as Stanforth, in walking up and down, peered suspiciously at us as he passed, but it may have been my fancy. He must have recognised her, I am sure. But we paid no attention to him. He was a fine, bronzed, blue-eyed fellow, this brother Colin of hers, and soon we were all three laughing and talking together. Perhaps I was a trifle anxious to

make Stanforth more madly suspicious than ever, if not jealous.

I lost sight of brother and sister at landing, having to look after my traps; but we met them again at Dunalein Inn. Honest Colin promised me good fishing tours with him if ever I returned. Once, when he went to the shore to see if the smack was ready, I had a chat with Sheila alone, near the shore, among the fairy shades of Dunalein Castle woods. She had lost her gaiety then, and was shy and reserved; only she said—not her father this time—I was to be sure to return—quite sure. Bonny Sheila!

It approached the hour at which Stanforth and I had to start with the mail-gig for Portree. While we were in the lobby of the inn, the McDonalds came up together to say good-bye, a ceremony your Highlander never omits. As Stanforth and I were busy putting our rods and traps into order, Colin stepped forward to say farewell, and I wished him heartily good luck in his fishing. Then Sheila, gentle Sheila, hung a little back, with her accustomed shyness before strangers. In the doorway stood the landlord. Stanforth paused in his packing operations. I saw him do so, as if to detect any tenderness in our farewell. It was a trying moment. I am not remarkably courageous, and I own it was highly rash and injudicious; but I was provoked at his past impudence, so, stepping forward, and taking Sheila's unresisting hand in mine, I bent down and kissed her rosy lips.

Nobody said anything; there was a dead silence; nobody even coughed. The McDonalds left immediately, and we did the same shortly afterwards.

Stanforth and I scarcely spoke on the voyage south. Once, indeed (at Inverness, I think), he

drew my attention to the fact that a small locket seemed to him to be a-missing from the bunch of charms at my watch-guard. Had I lost it? I assured him it was perfectly safe; as indeed it doubtless was.

I have since learned that he has been saying at our club that, while on a tour with him in the Hebrides, I made a great fool of myself. That was his exact expression—that I made a great fool of myself. *Did I?*

THEN, THEN'S THE TIME.

When Jones observes, with mincing smile,
That he's brought out a 'little poem,'
And, if indulgence you will show him,
Your morning's leisure he'll beguile
With Canto I., 'The Wail of Pain.'
Then, then's the time to catch the train.

When builders show the country seat,
Old, picturesque, of easy access,
Of lowest rent and trifling taxes,
And point its prospect, fair and sweet,
O'er fertile meads and smiling plains:
Then, then's the time to look for 'drains.'

When all your country villa's charm
Has been enjoyed by friends from city,
With raptured thanks and speeches pretty;
And, in your turn, a welcome warm
You seek in drawing-rooms and clubs:
Then, then's the time to look for snubs.

When wife dear with soft caress
And kisses from her two lips rosy,
And hissing urn and armchair cosy,
Welcome you home from storm and stress:
Then, as the fragrant cup she fills,
Then, then's the time to look for 'bills.'

R. T. GUNTON.

TUMBLEDOWN FARM.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY,'
'GOLDEN GIRLS,' ETC.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

WHETHER TO DIE OR LIVE?

'Whither shall I fly?
Where hide me and my miseries together?
O Belvidera! I'm the wretchedest creature
E'er crawled on earth! Now, if thou hast
virtue,
Take me into thy arms, and speak the
words of peace
To my divided soul, that wars within me,
And raises every sense to my confusion.
By Heaven, I'm tottering on the very
brink
Of ruin, and thou art all the hold I've
left!'

ORWAY.

SINCE novel-writing began, was there ever a story which, having been ended honestly and in good faith, all things being wound up, should of its own persistency start off again? I had written 'The End,' I truly believed that the last of the story had been told; yet here I sit this sunny August morning, pen in hand, and my mind full of the most extraordinary sequel.

Why should I not give you an odd example? Suppose, strolling one summer day in Hampton churchyard, you read on a tombstone, 'Here lie the mortal remains of Dr. John Book, who lived in the parish, boy and man, for a matter of sixty-five years, more or less.' Presently (after delivering yourself of a sigh for auld acquaintance) you walk down the street. There, sauntering along the shady side in a new coat and hat, you meet your humble servant! That would be a fine surprise, I take it. Now here, you observe, is the novel of

VOL. XLVI. NO. CCLXXIII.

Tumbledown Farm, which expired July 31st, 1884, and was buried, tombstoned, and forgotten; and behold *Tumbledown Farm* on foot again, trudging down the long lane of life, that seems to have many a turning, but never an end.

But how shall I tell the remainder story? Shall I tell it in the order of its occurrence to myself? or shall I throw the narrative into the order of time, leaving you to guess how and when each bit came to my knowledge? I shall tell it in the order of time, and not trouble myself or you with explanations, which any one who thinks for an instant can supply for himself; while those who don't think, you observe, will never raise the question.

Just one word in your ear. The first part of this story, I told you, was written by me, assisted by Miss. Now, if the whole truth were told, this second part ought to be headed, "Written by Miss, assisted by me;" for most of the facts following reached me through my young lady, and are related in her own pretty language. If you could but see the free flowing handwriting of some leaves, and the crooked crabbed pothooks and hangers of other leaves, you would feel no surprise when one paragraph reads like old Dr. Book's parlour, and the other like Miss Millicent Hervey's drawing-room. Have I said enough?

Vanity had been dangerously wounded. The ball had entered her side, and the doctors had

great trouble in extracting it. The patient suffered much; and from weakness she dropped into fever, and lay flushed and moaning and wandering in her mind right on to the time of the falling of the leaves. The physicians said she would die, in all probability; but she rallied, and, with a weary heart-sick look upon her face, turned, as it were, up the toilsome road leading back from still death to the life that now is.

A lady was nursing in the hospital who was what I used to call a nun—only I believe now the saying is ‘sister,’ in consequence of belonging to our Church, and not to the Papists. She was, in point of fact, a Puseyite. This lady I did not like, being myself a member of the Protestant religion, and not caring for new-fangled ways during the matter of, let us say, five or ten years which I have to live. Besides, the ladies will forgive me for saying—being an old man and past meaning harm—that when their Maker has been good enough to provide them with pretty faces, I cannot see why they should be squeezing their cheeks between the two leaves of a poke bonnet. I tell you plainly, I took a dislike to this lady. Having warned you so far, I must now say, for the lady in question, that, in spite of her dress, she was agreeable to the eye—when, that is to say, the eye got a fair chance. She might have been a matter of forty or forty-five years of age, tall, with fair hair, good complexion, and most extraordinary white teeth. Besides, she was the brightest cheerfullest woman you ever saw. Whether the Popish gown and bonnet made the face brighter by contrast or not, I can’t say; but, without a doubt, the lady was pleasant to see, providing, you observe, that you looked at her,

and not at what she wore. I never saw that woman out of temper. I never saw her in a hurry. Never saw her without a fine, healthy, hearty smile, as if, to put it in my way, she had eaten a good breakfast, and was ready for the day’s work. And they do tell me that sometimes when there was a bad case, or one of great suffering, her goodness was uncommon, and that the very touch of her hand on a throbbing forehead seemed to cool it. The prayers she would say were wonderful; enough to make one think that all parties might find themselves right when they got right up to the doors of the good place. For all that, we must be careful to maintain the Protestant religion.

This lady, then, was at the hospital when Miss Vanity was brought in, and she heard all the awful story; and really she seemed to be drawn to the young woman by what she was told. The doctors had their own notions about Vanity, which is little wonder; and remarked upon her beauty; and gave each other the whisper; and were tolerably sure that she was a knowing one. Somehow this lady, Sister Catherine, never took that view of things, but treated the sick girl like a daughter; never let fall a hint that she was not as good as herself. Anyhow, she found the way to Vanity Hardware’s heart.

Poor Vanity Hardware! Wounded in body, and utterly broken in spirits, she clung to her new friend like a child, and told her all the story of her life. How her mother had been good and true through all her sufferings, until her death. How, when dying, she had called Vanity to her side, and put a little faded white flower into the child’s hand, saying,

‘There, darling, I laid that

flower on your little breast the day you were baptised. Then the flower was as fresh and sweet as your bosom was white and pure. Keep that flower, year after year, my child. Never do anything to soil it—'

'Which I never did,' Vanity said, bursting into tears at this place. 'Never—it is true—though I was often tempted, and on the edge of what was bad many, many times. I never forgot mother's dying words—'

'For which,' the good lady said, 'thank the blessed Lord!'

'My girl,' the sister said, after a very long silence, 'you have a new life before you.'

'No,' Vanity answered, with a firmness in her beautiful eyes that amazed the lady, 'you mistake me. I shall never be good.'

'Hush,' the other rejoined, in a whisper meant to soothe and to reprove in the same breath.

'Never,' Vanity repeated. 'Good people are not my sort. I always think of Aminadab Sleek.'

'Who was Aminadab Sleek?'

'O, an old hypocrite—in a play. I acted in it once.'

'But your mother, my girl. She was good.'

And at this word Vanity Hardware turned her face upon the pillow and burst out crying. For all the world like a broken heart!

CHAPTER II.

SHREWISH, BUT KINDLY.

'Quick temper in good women—why will not some essayist discourse in praise of that? Why, the disposition of the best woman I know hath more than a smack of this pungent ingredient; and the most graceful defender of her own sex that breathes has asserted that but for the wrath of woman the masculine virtues would never come to fruit. These ladies of the "hasty spark" are among the best of the species.'—ANONYMOUS.

BUT Sister Catherine was not

the woman to give Vanity up. For one thing, the girl's loveliness attracted her. Nun or no nun, I never yet saw the woman who had not an instinctive drawing towards a beautiful face; notwithstanding which fact, if the beautiful face should subsequently come into rivalry with their own, these admiring ladies can then express another opinion. And quite right too. But Sister Catherine, attracted by Vanity's looks, pitying her sorrow, and sustained most of all by her own resolute will, determined that this girl should have one more chance in life, and that a good one.

I am no story-spinner, so, passing over the means by which the sister brought about what follows, I pass straight from September to October, and from the hospital ward to the dark lawn of Tetbury Park, Gloucestershire. The fact is, Sister Catherine had a niece, a married lady, who lived about fourteen miles away in this handsome country house. This niece was rich, and of the same persuasion as the aunt; that is, she was a Puseyite, but, I understand, was a charitable lady in spite of it, and did many good works.

This niece was not a nun nor at all nunnish in her ways; but fond of life and fashion, only with this leaning to Puseyism which I have just mentioned. Now to this young lady the sister despatched Vanity Hardware, with a letter of introduction, and the time was just about 6.30 on a rainy October evening when poor Vanity, with trembling steps and beating heart, stole up the avenue towards the fine house to which she had been directed.

Necessity has no law. Had retreat been possible, or, more probably, had there been any place to which she could have

fled, or had her purse not been empty, Vanity would never have knocked at that door. Perhaps shrewd Sister Catherine foresaw all that. And so it came to pass that poor Vanity, under compulsion but irresolute, still stood leaning upon the iron fence which ran round the lawn. She gazed into the handsome drawing-room, which was so brilliantly lighted that her quick eyes could see all that went on.

This must have been what quality call the children's hour. Two mites were playing about the room, dressed to perfection, and Vanity noticed that a third small girl, with a white face and long dark hair, was lying on a lady's lap, watching the other children with a tired expression. The mother was a handsome lady, richly dressed. She had what we call a high complexion, and a sort of look which signified that if, in the course of conversation, *she* were to say, 'A thing is so and so,' and you were to reply, 'Begging your pardon, madam, but the thing is *not* so and so,' the conversation would not end at that point. Do I take you with me? For all that, the lady caressed the weary child with a kind hand, and tried to make the little creature smile at the gambols of the others. So Vanity called this lady mamma at once, and, attracted by the bright pictures of the drawing-room, the actress gazed on with observing eyes.

A gentleman sat in an easy-chair reading the newspaper, and not taking notice of anybody. From the familiar way the two little children ran about him, Vanity judged him to be the father of the family. His face she could not see. Next she remarked that on a settee there was posted an elderly lady, very stout, very stiff, very dogmatic in her

demeanour. She seemed to look around, and say this:

'I have settled all matters that have come up heretofore, and settled 'em right; and am, besides, prepared for all that's to come.'

Now, Vanity Hardware had eyes like a lynx or a hawk, and the light of the room, as I have said, was brilliant; so she saw how this old lady watched with shrewd and designing face a bit of byplay which was going on at the piano.

Beside the piano stood a well-fashioned ruddy young man, who had evidently just dropped into the drawing-room as he dismounted from his horse, for he held his whip in his hand, and his dress was splashed with mud. A young lady was sitting at the instrument, looking up with laughter into his face. This young lady was not handsome, unless on the ground of handsome is that handsome does.

Something in this bit of the scene caused Vanity to forget herself for a moment. She watched curiously, and thought she could make out the whole story of that bright drawing-room, though perhaps she added some notes later on when she knew the facts directly. She judged the young horseman to be an easy good-natured sort of fellow, who would in all probability play the game of follow my leader in life, more especially if 'my leader' should happen to be a sharp young lady, who, not having many chances, was determined to make the most of one. It appeared also that the young lady above described was angling for the young horseman cleverly, he for his part keeping his mouth pretty wide open, so that she could throw the hook in clean. Further, Vanity concluded that the erect dogmatic old lady on the settee was the mother of

the young lady, and trainer, backer, and so forth in the present contest. Next came what, in the high language of the books, might be called a curious phenomenon. The mistress of the house, the handsome, dressy, high-complexioned lady, darted glances at the group, which plainly said, 'You, my handsome young horseman, are a great simpleton; you, artful girl, are a forward minx; you, my domineering dame, are an unscrupulous old woman. I don't want this marriage to take place. I hate the thought of it; yet here, in my drawing-room, under my eyes, this game is being played; and I must show no vexation, because it would be bad manners. All I can do is to tattoo on this carpet, and bear your triumphant glances as best I may.'

Little Vanity Hardware dreamed that in this brilliant drawing-room she saw enacted the prologue to her own future life. Little handsome horseman, angry mistress, flirting girl, and a domineering dame dreamed how, out in the cold October mist, a watcher stood who was afterwards to step into the midst of their schemes and hopes and fears, intrepid and resistless.

Vanity had forgotten herself. The contrast of the dark cold October air threw warmth and brightness upon the drawing-room, and she might have gazed on for an hour; but all at once the wind broke into a moan, and the mist became driving rain, which came down in a drenching shower. Vanity hurried to the front-door, and rang the bell.

A spruce maid answered. After some hesitation, the answer was given that, 'O yes, missis probably would see the young person.'

Next moment handsome 'missis' came out, with quick step and

sharp imperative voice. She eyed poor Vanity with no great favour, and before the girl could speak, the lady, divining her errand, cried out,

'Really I cannot be troubled! Anne'—addressing the maid—'how often must I repeat that persons calling in this way are to send in a message, saying what their business is? You have made this hall so cold that one shivers. Do not keep the door open a moment longer.'

Pretty plain hint that Miss Vanity must march. In other days the haughty confident actress might have replied with some stinging word; but now, broken and sickly and hopeless, she meekly turned to leave, when, as the door opened, the retreating mistress saw how heavily it rained.

'Now, Anne,' she called out in her vixenish voice, 'that girl cannot go out in such rain. Let her sit down until the storm is over.'

Poor weary Vanity, with not a spark of pride or resentment in her breast, sank down on the seat. As she did so, the light of the lamp fell on her face; and the wonderful beauty of the face, its pallor, its deep sadness, arrested the sharp lady.

'You look very pale,' she said, coming back, and speaking still in the same sharp voice. 'Are you ill?'

Vanity looked up. Something in the lady's face encouraged her, although the tones were harsh. But when she tried to speak, her lips would not obey her, and the only sound she uttered was a sob.

Immediately the lady flew off to the drawing-room, and Vanity heard her say,

'Augustus! Augustus! there is a poor girl outside. She looks so

thin, and so pretty—and so cold. Do go and see her.'

'Maud,' an indolent voice replied, 'what have I to do with such people! If you listen to their tales, you may as well commence relieving officer at once.'

'Quite right, Augustus,' cried a voice, which Vanity felt must be the voice of Dame Domineer, 'quite right. Providence would not approve of your housing every vagrant that comes to your door.'

'Really, Augustus,' the lady retorted, 'how self-indulgent you are, here in this warm room! And that poor creature outside!'

'Maud!' called out Dame Domineer, 'you were always self-willed, ever since you were four years old.'

'Well, well, well,' Augustus rejoined, in a good-natured tone, 'this comes of being married to a wife. I suppose I may as well go at once. You are the most restless—'

'Now, Augustus,' the lady cried, 'do go!'

'Augustus,' cried the dame, 'don't go. Maud, I am astonished!'

The next instant the gentleman was standing beside Vanity.

'What is your business, my girl?'

He asked this question with a curious air of mingled condescension, authority, and kindness.

Vanity took courage. It seemed easier, after all, to deal with a man.

'I come with a letter from Sister Catherine.'

'Indeed!' the gentleman said; but in that brief space he, too, passed under the spell of her face and voice. 'Let me see, will you—won't you—had you not better come in to—the drawing-room?'

Dame Domineer must have crept to the door to listen; for in

whispered accents that were ludicrously audible she was heard to exclaim,

'Maud, come here; Augustus is actually asking her in!'

Augustus looked naturally uncomfortable; but Vanity, with an ease which the gentleman did not fail to admire, affected to have heard nothing.

'I am not fit for the drawing-room,' she said. 'Please don't ask me.'

'My library, then,' he said. 'Follow me.'

But they had to pass the open drawing-room door; and the irrepressible old lady was plainly heard exclaiming, in the topmost notes of indignation and astonishment,

'Maud, he is taking the young woman into the library!'

'What then?' replied Maud. By her voice she had moved to another part of the room. 'Why should he not take her into the library?'

'Maud!' was the answer in awful tones. 'You have been just the same. Ever since you were four years old!'

CHAPTER III.

AN OLD COAL.

'Of all affliction taught a lover yet,
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget.'
FORB.

THE upshot of the interview in the library, and the perusal of Sister Catherine's letter, was auspicious. An hour later Vanity found herself alone in a pretty bedroom, surrounded by comfort and refinement, and twelve hours' quiet before her. Weary though she was, she examined the room with pleased curiosity. The furniture, the pictures on the wall, the writing and toilet tables were all

set out with taste; and poor Vanity, who knew by experience the artifices of poverty or the flashy display of momentary wealth, saw now for the first time the quiet elegance of a wealthy English home. She recalled the stories her mother used to tell of her own early days, and somehow Vanity did not feel altogether an alien in this luxurious mansion. A certain pleasure mingled with her forebodings of the future. There was an interval of rest, however brief, in her tempestuous life, and so at last she sank to sleep.

In the morning a servant brought her a message that the lady of the house was engaged, and could not see her until twelve o'clock; and meanwhile a small boudoir next to her room was set apart for her use. Here she had her breakfast. The room looked out upon the garden; and as the morning was warm and sunny, she opened the window and enjoyed the fresh air. So she sat and mused, thankful that an interview, which must be important to her, was for a while postponed.

Well might Vanity sit and muse. What road in life was she to take? Her experience was remarkable, almost unexampled. Her mother, affectionate, pious, and refined, had made it the chief care of her struggling life to imprint something of herself upon her child. But Vanity had inherited some of her father's qualities also: his recklessness, his love of change, his desire for pleasure at any cost. Besides, for many years past, the girl had lived in a whirl of excitement. The glare of the footlights is not apt to foster modesty. Vanity loved admiration, and she had been admired, applauded, courted, and all the rest of it. She was still young and brilliant, and her talent

for acting was undoubted. Why not go to London and try her luck? The life of an actress might be respectable and exemplary; and even if she chose that her life should not be so, what, she asked herself, had the virtuous world done for Vanity Hardware that Vanity Hardware should so consider the virtuous world? Was she not her own mistress? Here came the wild thrill in her heart which none but the true Bohemian knows: the prospect of life unfettered; virtuous, perhaps; pleasant, anyhow; above all, free! Yes, she would start away, and make her fortune or chance her luck. There was a kind of excitement in the very idea of staking her future, and waiting for the fall of the dice with a breathless suspense such as people of propriety never know in their dull easy lives of respectable certainty. Applause, admiration, dress, money, change—compared with these, what had propriety to offer? Nothing. As she thought of all this she recalled one of her benefit nights in Carlisle, where in some trifling operetta she had danced a few steps, singing while she danced. She could see even now the admiring eyes fixed upon her; the light music tinkled in her ears; the lights glittered; and her heart, so long loaded with care, began to dance too, with a wild excitement. Her choice was made! She had suffered enough at the hands of men and the world. For the rest of her life she would be happy in her own way.

A horror had oppressed her ever since the tragedy at Tumbledown Farm: why allow it any longer to brood over her mind? Her father was gone. She had no part in his awful fate. She might change her name, and with that banish for ever the terrible

gloom which even an hour ago she had believed must rest upon her for ever. 'Life is short,' said Vanity; 'and youth and beauty and delight are shorter still!'

Her experience of Willie Snow's inconstancy had been a bitter disclosure. Vanity had idolised that young fellow. All that her mother had ever taught her about goodness had gathered around Willie, and he became in her eyes the image of integrity and virtue; and how warm and living integrity and virtue seemed embodied in his person! Just when she expected him to rise to heroism Willie had sunk down to respectable selfish commonplace. Vanity suffered not from lacerated affection alone. Her ideal had been degraded. Not shattered: that she might have endured. Virtue and goodness had been reduced to feeble amiability and prudent consideration for number one. Vanity coned over the admirers of other days. Not one had 'a character.' But she seriously questioned whether any of them would have behaved like respectable Willie Snow!

'So much for respectability!' she said in heartfelt scorn. And yet she had no heartfelt scorn for Willie Snow. She loved him still—in spite of all, she loved him still. And women forgive as long as they love. And they persist in finding excuses for men as long as any affection remains. 'If Willie had not been respectable,' murmured Vanity, 'he would never have cast me off. It was all owing to his respectability!'

And thus this sunny morning, musing on her life, and gazing out upon the pleasant garden, Vanity made a resolution which was daring, stern, and wild, and yet had something pathetic in it. She would take leave of these

kind entertainers; sell her watch and rings; make her way to London; look for a theatrical engagement; work her way up in the profession; live after her own heart. She had escaped from the dominion of Sister Catherine, who had unquestionably gained an influence over her, and given her an impression of genuine goodness which she did not easily efface. But a secret whisper in her heart, which as yet she had scarcely interpreted, gave her strength. Her choice was made. Let the past be past. Her brief dream of goodness was over. Bad she did not wish to be; but light-hearted, prosperous, easy, above all independent of the respectable people—this she could be, and this she would be.

But what was this whisper in her heart? Why, as she listened to it, did her colour deepen, and her eyes grow strangely bright, and her pulse beat fast?

Willie Snow—the man who loved me once—who was stolen from me—who could not resist me even now—the man that I love still—what if I won him back after all?

CHAPTER IV.

ABOUT TO MARRY.

Borachio. I give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

Don John. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool, that betroths himself to quietness?—*Much Ado about Nothing.*

SUDDENLY, as she sat at the window, she saw her handsome hostess appear, walking in a very sisterly way with the young horseman. They promenaded the gravel walk up and down, engaged in earnest talk; yet it was not altogether serious, for the gentleman laughed now and again, and so did the lady, only her laughter

was by no means unconstrained. A striking couple, Vanity thought. The lady looked more comely than before in her morning dress; and as for the gentleman, in his suit of gray tweed, and with his youth, vigour, well-turned limbs, and strong easy movements, he might well win a woman's heart. It was a manly face, good-humoured, not clever, but with enough force to redeem it from the fault of mere beauty. 'Neither wise man,' Vanity thought, 'nor simpleton. Man of the world, though; and good sort of that?' It was pleasant to see the brother's arm drawn through the sister's as they walked; and the looks they exchanged expressed easy familiar affection. They walked up and down, down and up, and each time they passed under Vanity's window a sentence or two reached her ears.

'No, Tom,' the lady said, 'I don't agree with you: most decidedly not. I cannot call her handsome. Of course I don't care to say she is anything else.'

'But, like the celebrated parrot, Maud,' he replied, 'you think a deal.'

'I wonder,' Vanity thought, 'who it is that Tom thinks handsome, and Maud thinks plain?'

But the talk was lost in the distance, until as they paced back again these little shots were exchanged:

'She plays well, Maud.'

'Most mechanical.'

'And then her talk is lively.'

'Yes; old jokes fished out of Punch.'

'Maud! Maud!'

'Not like your fun, Tom—fresh and original.'

'Perhaps not, dear; but then, you see—'

Distance again, and the voices died off.

'Well,' Vanity said to herself,

with a little toss of her head, 'I fancied that the listener was not going to hear any good of herself. It's not *me*, however! Am I listening, I wonder? *Is* this listening? Of course it is nothing of the kind.'

So she listened on.

'Besides, Tom'—Maud raised her finger warningly—'mark my words: you will have the old lady on your hands. Charming mother-in-law, Tom.'

'O no, you know,' Tom called out, in sincere alarm. 'Take precautions, you know. Insert special clause in the lease!'

There was much gaiety over this point, and when they returned, shots and laughter were still being exchanged.

'Pleasant life to you, Tom! young Mars and old Juno! Remember old Juno can't bear cigars!'

'Nothing of the sort, Maud. Special clause in the lease, I say. Notwithstanding that nothing in the foregoing shall apply to mamma. Provided always that if the husband may not bolt out the mother-in-law, he may bolt off himself.'

At this sally Maud was immensely diverted.

'Not bad, Maud, was it?'

Tom evidently felt he had said a clever thing.

Again they returned, now speaking more seriously.

'You see'—he knocked the ash out of his cigar—'what is a fellow to do? These beauties require such a lot of love-making, and it eats up a fellow's time. Now, Arabella is not excessive in that way.'

'Not excessive in the way of beauty, you mean?'

Which blunder Mistress Maud made with so perfect an air of innocence, that Tom replied quite unconsciously,

'No: I mean not exacting.' For the last time they walked back.

'Then I suppose it is settled, Tom!'

'Don't think I could do better, Maud.'

'Well, dear, I hope you will be happy.'

But if ever a kind sister's voice expressed sorrow and disappointment, verging on disgust, it was Maud's voice then.

At that moment an unmistakable summons was heard:

'Mr. Pembroke! Mr. Pembroke! Here is Arabella, waiting this half-hour for you to show her the beehives!'

Maud, the handsome vixen, gave a disdainful look, and then, with veiled sarcasm, dared to say,

'There's a wasp's nest, too. Don't forget that, Tom!'

'What is this I hear about a wasp's nest?' demanded the old lady, sailing tremendously down the gravel walk, like a man-of-war. 'Is there any danger?'

'There is generally danger when wasps are about,' remarked Maud, with a quiet enjoyment of her good fortune in the retort. 'Unless people are on their guard.'

The old lady regarded Maud Neville with a kind of angry misgiving, which was curiously tempered by personal trepidation.

'Mr. Pembroke,' she called out dramatically, 'explain this. Maud cannot be made out. Is there any danger?'

'Not the slightest,' replied Tom. 'We'll try fumigation.'

'And you know,' Maud interjected, with fierce rapidity, 'wasps can't bear tobacco.'

The old lady was no dullard. She saw an allegory in this speech, and understood its bitterness. But she knew her game.

'Then, Tom Pembroke,' she said impressively, 'I commit my

darling to your care. The grass is too wet for me.'

'O, never mind,' Maud cried, with admirable cheerfulness; 'I can look after them!'

'Maud,' the old lady called out, in an awful voice, 'how imprudent of you! A woman with a family on this damp grass!'

'Never mind, dear; I shall run the risk.'

'Maud!' said the old lady, now exasperated, 'you were always self-willed. Ever since you were four years old!'

CHAPTER V.

VANITY MAKES A FRIEND.

'Perhaps there is nothing more lovely than the love of two beautiful women, who are not jealous of each other's charms.'—*LORD BEACONSFIELD, The Young Duke.*

BUT Fate fought for the old lady. Tom and Arabella were destined to have the bees and wasps all to themselves.

Just at that moment a servant came hurrying out and whispered something to her mistress, who flew into the house without a word, seeming in an instant to forget her brother and the dangerous daughter and the angry dame. The dame gazed after her in wrath, and she would have called after Maud for an explanation, but reflecting that this retreat was to her advantage, she restrained herself.

'Tom Pembroke,' she said again, 'take care of Arabella.'

'Make your mind easy,' said Tom.

'And, Arabella, don't stay away too long.'

'No, dearest mother.'

'And, both of you!' cried the old lady, 'remember that I am here—and waiting for you.'

Each of these injunctions was

calculated to impress Tom Pembroke with the idea of the preciousness of Arabella; and that she must be watched like a vestal virgin; and that, above all, her mother was a guardian who could command fear as well as love. The cleverness of the whole will therefore be recognised; and the old lady evidently praised herself as she sat down majestically, and arranged her skirts with the conclusive air which is characteristic of ladies of her standing when they have acquitted themselves so as to secure the approval of their own consciences.

The cause of Maud Neville's abrupt exit did not at first appear. In about a quarter of an hour she came into Vanity's room, and Vanity noticed that her expression was anxious. Preoccupied she was; but this did not prevent her from entering into Vanity's concerns with kindness and attention. The letter of her aunt—Sister Catherine—had evidently not been the first communication made to her concerning the young actress, for she knew all her history; and Vanity felt grateful for the tact and delicacy with which she glided over things which would be painful to the poor wanderer. Vanity was filled with admiration. This handsome wealthy young woman, with her vigour and good sense, and her readiness to help the helpless, was a fresh study in life. Vanity had been used to that monotonous sort of character which lives chiefly in the world of gaslight, which, being reckless, fancies itself interesting, and is nothing if not unconventional. Alas! poor Vanity knew a little—very little, it must be confessed—of what she called 'serious' people; and she would describe the class in two syllables—'plain' and 'dull.' This handsome young woman of the world

—Paris dress, fine manner, vigorous good sense; kind heart, and high tone—was a revelation of her own sex to poor Vanity Hardware. 'A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn' may sound sufficiently satirical; but there is no doubt whatever that Maud Neville's fine womanly character made a deeper impression on Vanity because of the lady's fashionable air. It was a surprise to find that true piety and healthy unaffected virtue could appear in a woman whose dress and style would have secured the admiration of a theatre.

That some scheme of life for Vanity had been arranged between Sister Catherine and her niece was evident throughout the conversation. Much Vanity wondered what the scheme could be; and her curiosity was quickened by every sentence she heard. She could not fancy this nimble, lively, dressy woman recommending a gloomy, secluded, penitential life. Every minute she grew more charmed by the kind manner of her new friend, and felt even ready to accept her guidance. And Maud Neville, on her part, was irresistibly attracted by the beauty of the wanderer, and could not conceal her admiration. But, after all, this secret plan, whatever it might be, Vanity was never to know.

A knock was heard at the door: the same maid who had hurried out into the garden came in.

'Please, ma'am, the doctor is here.'

'But why do you look so white?' the mistress asked, reading the servant's face with quick apprehension. 'Is Miss Maud worse?'

'Please, ma'am, the doctor must speak to you.'

'It is something serious!' the lady exclaimed; 'I know it is something serious!'

And, with a face now paler than the servant's, she hurried from the room.

The maid lingered for a moment.

'What is the matter?' Vanity asked.

'Our smallest young lady has got smallpox,' the servant said, shuddering as she spoke. 'Master has seen the doctor, and we don't know what to do.'

Vanity Hardware had the terror of that disease which every woman feels, and she turned pale herself.

'And the little lady is master's pet,' the servant continued; 'and mistress has always made so much of her; and she has always slept beside mistress, and she won't hardly go out of her sight.'

Vanity did not at first see the drift of this.

'And now, you see,' the maid went on, 'the little lady cannot be kept quiet, but keeps calling for her mother; and the doctor wants her moved up-stairs; but the little lady won't let any one touch her but her mother, and they are afraid the child will fret herself to death.'

'I daresay,' Vanity remarked, 'her mother will nurse her.'

'There it is, you see,' the maid said, closing the door, and speaking in a confidential whisper: 'master says the mother shall not go near her. You see'—closing the door more impressively—'master is so proud of missus's looks; and he says the risk shall not be run.'

'Can't they get a nurse?' Vanity asked.

'Don't you see,' the other replied, 'that's where it is. The little lady is so used to mistress singing to her, and being with her, that she will not allow any nurse to come near her; and we only keep her quiet by the five minutes saying, "Mamma's com-

ing, dear;" and even then she bursts out times and times.' Here the maid paused for an instant. 'And, if you please,' she added, 'doctor says the little lady must be kept quite away from everybody; and your room is the best in the house for her; and will you please come down-stairs? Your room is made dark, and the little lady is to be taken there at once.'

Vanity came out upon the gallery over the large entrance-hall, and thence she witnessed the scene which the next chapter shall faintly portray.

CHAPTER VI.

A NOBLE DEED.

'Nature often enshrines gallant and noble hearts in weak bosoms; oftenest—God bless her!—in female hearts.'

CHARLES DICKENS.

THE gallery looked down upon the entrance-hall, out of which several doors opened, and one or two short flights of steps ran up to different passages. At the top of one of these flights stood the redoubtable old lady in a most excited state. For some inexplicable reason, she had gathered up her skirts; and the first idea her figure suggested was that of a stout elderly lady, of inflexible purpose, who was about to wade a river. Idea two arose upon observation of the handkerchief which she held to her face, and which exhaled an odour of powerful aromatic vinegar, and scented the entire atmosphere. Idea three was presented by her outstretched right arm, which gave her an imperial aspect, as of one about to deliver a word of universal command. Idea four arose from the pallor of her cheeks, which signified abject terror struggling with a will powerful by nature, and

now exasperated by the provoking turn affairs had taken; so that not even fear could extinguish mighty wrath.

'I always said so,' the old lady called out. 'This comes of your Sunday school treats. But Maud never would listen to advice—not since she was four years old!'

Poor Maud, pale and crying, sat upon a chair. Beside her stood the doctor and her husband; and, in the silence which followed the old lady's allocution, the wail of the sick child was plainly heard. At the sound, the mother started to her feet.

'Augustus!' she called out piteously, 'I must go! Doctor, do say that I am to go!' The doctor looked at the husband, but did not speak. 'Augustus,' his wife cried, 'don't forbid me. Baby will die if she frets on in this way. It is cruel to keep me. It is my duty to run whatever risk there may be. Do let me go. Listen! I cannot bear to hear her.'

The husband did not speak.

'Maud!' the old lady called out, wafting a vinegar gale across the scene as she removed her handkerchief, 'don't fly in the face of Providence.'

'Doctor,' the young mother pleaded, seeing her husband would not speak, 'say something. Command me to go. The child's life is in your hands. It is your duty to speak!'

Even in her anguish out came a flash of Maud's temper. How Vanity admired her!

'So far as the child's life is concerned,' the doctor answered gravely, 'no doubt she will have a better chance, if you are with her.'

'There, Augustus; you hear!'

'But, madam,' the doctor went on, shaking his head, 'Mr. Neville is nervous about you. I

cannot say his fears are unfounded.'

'Maud,' her husband said, drawing close to her, 'I cannot permit it. We must get a nurse. Baby will soon cry herself to sleep.'

'O, it is cruel!' she said; 'it is cruel!'

No one spoke. But the child's wail came forth again:

'Mamma! mamma! I want mamma!'

The poor mother, quite broken down, with nothing of her fiery temper left, caught her husband's hands and looked up imploringly in his face, and let her tears plead for her. And Vanity, gazing down, pitied the mother from her heart, and felt a kind of affection and compassion which was quite new to her.

'Maud,' the old lady called out, in her harsh voice, 'I am shocked! Did you not promise to love, honour, and obey? What is your word good for if you break it in a crisis?'

'How I hate that old woman!' Vanity thought.

At this point the soldier brother spoke.

'I feel for you, Neville,' he said to his brother-in-law; 'but I do think my sister is right. Her duty is with her child. Let her go, and leave the rest in the hands of God.'

The sister darted a look of unspeakable gratitude at her brother; and now the doctor took courage.

'On the whole, that seems the wisest thing,' he said. 'We must take every precaution.'

'Mind,' the old lady called out, 'I don't agree with either of you. Remember that hereafter.'

She threw out the word 'hereafter' in gloomy bass.

'Now, Augustus,' the wife cried, 'now you will let me go!'

Neville, feeling the tide run-

ning sharply against him, saw that he must speak decidedly. Like many easy-going people, he could, on occasion, assert himself irresistibly.

'There must be an end of this,' he said. 'Doctor, let us have a nurse at once. Maud, you must not go near the child; your life is too valuable to us all.'

Perhaps, had Neville been quite straightforward, he would have said that he prized his wife's fine face too highly to risk it; but poor Maud knew his inflexible tones, and sank sobbing into her chair.

'Quite right, Augustus,' the old lady called out. 'I give you the greatest credit. Maud, don't be upset; hereafter you will feel thankful, my love.'

Vanity had watched this scene with a remarkable look on her face; and now she hurried downstairs, and crossed the hall to the lady's side.

'I will nurse the baby,' she said. 'I am not afraid!'

The whole company stood transfixed. The young soldier acknowledged the power of beauty, by gazing for a moment at the stranger with a possibly too obvious admiration, but he soon recollected himself.

Maud Neville looked up.

'O, thank you, thank you,' she said. 'It wouldn't be the slightest use. Baby will have no one but myself.'

'I know, I know,' Vanity replied almost impatiently. 'Come with me.' Maud looked up in wonder; as for the rest, they stood in silent amazement; even the old lady was at a loss for a sentence. 'Come with me,' Vanity repeated, in a decisive voice. 'Bid your servant follow us.'

To the surprise of everybody, Maud Neville rose and walked across the hall with Vanity. The

servant followed, and all three went out of sight.

'Now, I want to be informed,' the soldier said, when the door closed upon Maud and Vanity, 'what does all this mean?'

'A most extraordinary proceeding,' the old lady observed. 'I do not care for the young woman's manner. I suppose this is another waif of Sister Catherine's.'

'If she be,' the soldier rejoined, 'I congratulate Sister Catherine on her taste in waifs.'

'Tom Pembroke!' the old lady called out, 'don't be frivolous. Your mind ought to turn to serious things just now, when, for anything we can tell, the complaint may come down-stairs and take some of *us* into eternity.'

Tom Pembroke was utterly abashed. Moral reproof always confounded him.

At this juncture the maid-servant was seen flying into the sick child's room, where the sound of closing of shutters was heard. Thence she ran up-stairs and disappeared. Then again she darted down to the doctor and whispered to him. After this she drew down every blind and closed every shutter of the hall-windows, reducing the place to darkness. Then, without explaining these proceedings, she disappeared once more.

The whole party still remained motionless, none daring to speak, and in the darkness and suspense it seemed that several minutes passed away.

At last, low, soft, sweet, in the most soothing lullaby note, they heard a voice singing:

'Now the day is over,
Night is drawing nigh,
Shadows of the evening
Steal across the sky.'

'Why,' whispered Neville to his brother, 'that is Maud, sing-

ing to the child. She sings that hymn to her, night by night.

Then, in the semi-darkness of the hall, the husband saw his wife, dressed in a long loose morning-robe which he knew well, bearing the child in her arms and chanting as she slowly moved across the hall. The effect of the song on the sick child soon appeared. The little weary voice caught up a word or two here and there, and sang it in a drowsy satisfied tone.

'Maud,' the husband whispered, in a low reproachful voice, 'I am grieved.'

He felt a hand in his own. Maud had stolen up to him from behind.

'Hush,' she said. 'Can't you understand?'

The sweeping gown touched his feet, and the muffled head of his child was close to his own, as the mysterious figure glided by, still singing:

'Jesu, give the weary
Calm and sweet repose;
With Thy tender blessing
May mine eyelids close.'

'Why, Maud!' whispered Neville, clasping his wife's hand, 'I could have sworn it was your very voice!'

'Is it not wonderful?' she whispered back. 'Baby believes she is in my arms, and she is quite happy.'

In the darkness Neville felt his wife leaning her head on his shoulder, and pouring out the mingled sorrow and thankfulness of her heart.

Meanwhile the dusky figure was seen slowly moving up the wide stairs towards the room where the child was to be laid. Low, sweet, the lullaby sounded:

'Grant to little children
Visions bright of Thee,
Guard the sailors tossing
On the deep blue sea.'

'But, Maud,' the husband said,

'when she leaves the child in the room, how much better shall we be?'

'Dear, dear!' exclaimed his wife, but in the lowest of whispers, 'she is going to nurse baby through the illness. The room is dark. Baby will never know, till she is well again!'

Vanity had reached the door of the sick-room. They could now see her figure plainly, and she turned round, as if to give the mother one last glimpse of her darling.

'Through the long night watches
May Thine angels spread
Their white wings above me,
Watching round my bed.'

The song was over. The dark threshold was passed. And the brave actress was shut in with her task and her danger.

CHAPTER VII.

MISS AND I TALK THINGS OVER.

Miss had changed since we first read the story together. She was more of a young woman now, and when she laid the paper down—for she was reader now, not I—her eyes met mine in a searching sort of way, with just the day-break of a smile on her face.

'What do you say of Vanity Hardware now, Doctor?'

'Miss,' I said, 'it's early days yet—early days in volume two, I mean.'

'Let me tell you one thing,' remarked miss: 'all that story about Vanity being in that horrid place—you remember, don't you?'

I nodded.

'There was not a syllable of truth in it.'

'On reflection,' I said, 'it would not have been like the young man to tell the truth.'

'But now, Doctor'—young lady's eyes quite sparkled—'what will be the end of Vanity? Will she marry this handsome young soldier?'

'Surely not, miss,' said I. 'That could never be.'

'You think him too respectable, Doctor?'

'Why, miss,' said I, 'you see he is more than respectable: he is genteel. No, miss,' I repeated, having turned the matter over, 'he couldn't marry her.'

'But would she marry him?'

'Why, of course she would,' I answered. Adding immediately, 'And no blame to her. The young woman has her prospects to consider.'

'Not much consideration of prospects in what she has done just now!'

'You see, miss,' I said, 'no doubt the young woman laid great stress on her vaccination. Not that I want to cry her down. But she had been used to play-acting, where fine things are done—and, you see—in fact, miss,' I said, 'I don't believe in Miss

Hardware. And you will find—mark my words—when her virtues have been to the wash and come home again, most of the colour will be gone out of them.'

'Why, Doctor, what a cynic you are!'

'Nothing, miss, but an old man who has been using two ears and two eyes a matter of nine-and-sixty years. Miss, believe me, women at her time of life never change for the better. Gray goodness was once green goodness. And well I know that when you finish that story you will have to tell me that this little snatch of goodness in Vanity Hardware was—'

I paused. Searching my young lady's face, I could see something like misgiving. She only said,

'This little snatch of goodness was what, Doctor?'

'Like the morning cloud, miss, and the early dew. Like the crackling of thorns under the pot. Smoke—blaze—crackle—and then, nothing!'

She did not contradict me, but with a grave face read on.

(To be continued.)

THE ROYAL PALACES OF LONDON.

PART I.

CHELSEA, KENNINGTON, WESTMINSTER.

‘Go with old Thames, view Chelsea’s glorious pile,
And ask the shattered warrior whence his smile;
Go view the splendid domes of Greenwich, go,
And own what raptures from reflection flow.’

The Pleasures of Memory.

ALL who take delight in the trivial surprises of coincidence will find pleasure in being reminded that the river Thames, on the western and eastern limits of London, flows by the sites of two ancient palaces at Chelsea and Greenwich. These localities, moreover, as though it were to repeat the similitude, are now distinguished by two hospitals, both designed by one architect, Sir Christopher Wren, for the militant services of the Crown. A not unpleasing tradition would ascribe the one to the large-hearted benevolence of a royal mistress, who, be her faults what they might, long retained a place in the sympathies of the people; the other, as should be more widely known, testifies to the affection with which King William III. cherished the memory of Mary, whose pity had been kindled by the sufferings of the victors at La Hogue.

The earliest mention we find of Chelsea is in a Saxon Chronicle for A.D. 785. In that year, Offa King of Mercia, the founder of St. Albans, received at Cealchylle the Romish legates, Gregory Bishop of Ostia, and Theophylact Bishop of Todi, whom Pope Adrian I. sent over for the reforming of religion in England. In a Saxon charter of King Eadward the Confessor the name appears as Cealchylle; in the Book

of Domesday, as both Cerecheda and Chelched, the one placed above the other, as though the writer knew not which was correct. In some title-deeds, *temp.* Edward II., belonging to Lord Cadogan, Lysons avers he saw the name spelt Chelcheth, or Chelchith. In the sixteenth century it was modified into Chelsey. For the name, Skinner and Newcourt give diverse derivations. Norden, in his *Speculum Britanniae*, says, more truly than either, that ‘it is so called from the nature of the place, whose strand is like the chesel (ceasel or cesel), which the sea casteth up of sand and pebblestones, thereof called Cheselsey, briefly Chelsey, as is Chelsey [Selsey] in Sussex.’ At its wide reach Maitland would fix the passage of the Thames by Julius Cæsar,* and the rout of the Britons at the hands of Claudius. Chelsea manor had been royal property from the earliest period. Offa resided here; and Dart, in his *History of Westminster Abbey*, records that one Thurstan leased to the Abbey the manor of Chelchelle or Chelcheya, which he then held of King Eadward the Confessor. The Saxon charter confirming this grant is in the British Museum, Thurstan being

* ‘Cæsar, cognito eorum consilio, ad flumen Tamesin, in fines Cassivellauni exercitum duxit; quod flumen uno omnino loco pedibus, atque hoc agrè transiri potest.’—*De Bello Gallico*, lib. v. § 18.

styled therein 'Governor of the King's Palace.*' The Book of Domesday, it is true, mentions no land or manor in Chelsea as belonging to West Minster, though Lysons would explain this with the conjecture that it is probably included in their possessions in Westminster itself, which were thirteen and a half hides in extent, the manor comprising but two. According to Gervaise of Tilbury, the hide is equivalent to one hundred acres. Abbot Gervase of Blois, a natural son of King Stephen, alienated this, with other manors of the Abbey, in favour of his mother Dameta and her heirs in fee. Amongst the records of the dean and chapter is the King's license for the lease, in 1368, of the sovereign's manor of Chelechith by one Robert de Heyle, to the abbot and convent, in lieu of certain payments in kind, a sum of 20*l.* yearly, and a house within the precincts, indicated as that of Sir John Molyne. In the forty-second year of Edward III. the manor stands valued at 25*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* per annum.† We read little more of Chelsea Palace until the reign of King Henry VII., when the manor was held by his faithful minister, Sir Reginald Bray, members of whose family are buried in the church. From Sir Reginald it descended to his niece Margaret, wife to Sir William, afterwards the Lord, Sandys of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.* In the year 1536 Lord Sandys gave it to King

Henry VIII. in exchange for Motesfont Priory.

The King, in the frequent visits he paid to Sir Thomas More—when he dined with him so frequently and unceremoniously, and as often walked with him in his famous garden, having his arm thrown lovingly about his neck—had much admired the pleasant riverside scenery, and praised the pure air and sandy soil of Chelsea. Hence, it is supposed, arose his desire to possess this ancient manor-house, when the revered head of Sir Thomas had fallen and been ignominiously set up on London Bridge by the cruel sickle tyrant, whose friendship and love to man or woman were almost as strongly to be dreaded as his enmity and hate.

To this old place came Elizabeth, the little three-year-old child of Anne Boleyn, when the brief reign of divorced Queen Katharine's maid of honour was over, and that of the murdered Queen's own maid of honour, Jane Seymour, had commenced. One can readily enough imagine the fair-haired child, with her delicate complexion, graceful little figure, and bright sadly wondering eyes filled with a vague terror as they brought her from the royal palace of Greenwich in the King's barge. The faces of the ladies about her would be grave and solemn, their eyes full of tearful pity. The sudden disappearance of her fond mother, and the reluctance of the attendants to speak of her, would be so utterly strange and terrible to a child so young. Nor is it difficult to follow in our mind's eye the progress of that royal barge from Greenwich to Chelsea, and conjure up sudden awe-stricken pointings and whisperings when the grim old towers and walls of the great city fortress and

* *Præfectus Palatinus.* See the translation into Latin in Hickes's *Thesaurus*, vol. i. fol. 159.

† Several of the manor court-rolls for the reigns of Edward III. and his successor are preserved at Westminster. At one court (16 Rich. II.) Florence North, a brewer, was presented for not putting the customary sign over his premises. At another (11 Rich. II.) the wife of Philip Wells was fined sixpence as a common babler—*garrulatrix*.

prison were in view, as they thought how, but a very little time before, possibly in that same vessel from which the child was gazing, the mother, talking wildly and incoherently, with now and then a burst of hysteric laughter, drew near it, and, becoming insensible, was carried to that low black fatal archway, from which she looked her last on liberty, and under which she went to meet her death, plunged, as it were, in a moment from the supreme height of glory, honour, and dignity, to the lowest depths of infamy, degradation, and abasement.

Of Elizabeth's child-life in that quaint old Chelsea manor-house by the church, which the father, who had branded her with illegitimacy, made her residence, we have little or nothing recorded. It appears to have been very old and dilapidated, and Henry, soon after it passed into his possession, erected in its place a new palace, for which he chose a site to the east of Winchester House. This building was of a quadrangular form, with lofty outside chimneys, courtyards, and an embattled gateway. It faced the river, and was pulled down in the middle of the last century. Of the row of houses erected upon its site, one is still traditionally known in the neighbourhood as 'the Manor House' and 'Queen Elizabeth's School,' and the present writer has passed some very pleasant merry hours beneath its roof.

Jane Seymour died two days after the birth of her son Edward. In time her place was filled by that zealous Protestant and pious lady Katharine Parr, eldest daughter of Sir Thomas Parr of Kendal, who had been twice widowed before. In 1543 she ascended the throne of our English Bluebeard, whose widow also she was, happily,

destined to become. To her, as a marriage jointure, Chelsea Palace was given, and to it she retired after the death of the King. Miss Aikin, in her *Memoirs of the Court and Times of Queen Elizabeth*, tells us that her father's widow retained the charge of that princess, and that the home of both was usually one or other of Katharine's jointure houses at Chelsea, Hanworth, or Hounslow. There is extant a letter written to Queen Katharine from Elizabeth in 1544, in elegant Italian, in the course of which she says: 'Inimical fortune, envious of all good and ever revolving human affairs, has deprived me for a whole year of your most illustrious presence, and, not thus content, has again robbed me of the same good, which thing would be intolerable to me did I not hope to enjoy it very soon. And in this my exile I well know that the clemency of your Highness has had as much care and solicitude for my health as the King's Majesty himself. By which thing I am not only bound to serve you, but also to revere you with filial love, since I understand that your illustrious Highness has not forgotten me every time you have written to the King's Majesty, which, indeed, it was my duty to have requested from you.' In another letter, written to the Queen in the same year from Ashridge, the Princess speaks of sending her stepmother a little book, which she has translated out of 'French rhyme into English prose, joining the sentences together, as well as the capacity of my simple wit and small learning could extend themselves.' The book was called *The Mirror, or Glass, of the Sinful Soul*.

It was most probably at Chelsea that the Lord Admiral Thomas Seymour, brother of the late

Queen Jane, made love to Elizabeth, then in her fourteenth year, to whom, in 1547, he proposed marriage directly after her father's death; and it was certainly here that he often resided when (having been rejected by Elizabeth) he married her stepmother Katharine, whom he had wooed previous to her marriage with King Henry, and whom he made very unhappy.

Writing of this marriage to her sister Mary, Elizabeth said, 'You are very right in saying, in your most acceptable letters, which you have done me the honour of writing to me, that, our interests being common, the just grief we feel on seeing the ashes, or rather the scarcely cold body, of the King our father so shamefully dishonoured by the Queen our stepmother, ought to be common to us also. I cannot express to you, my dear Princess, how much affliction I suffered when I was first informed of this marriage; and no other comfort can I find than that of the necessity of submitting ourselves to the decrees of Heaven, since neither you nor I, dearest sister, are in such a condition as to offer any obstacle thereto, without running heavy risk of making our own lot much worse than it is, at least so I think. We have to deal with too powerful a party, who have got all authority into their hands, while we, deprived of power, cut a very poor figure at Court. I think, then, that the best course we can take is that of dissimulation, that the mortification may fall upon those who commit the fault.'

The King built a new palace to the east of Winchester House, and gave it, for a marriage jointure, to Katharine Parr, who retired hither. In the *Burleigh Papers* (vol. i. fols. 61 and 93) some letters from Katharine, and

dated from Chelsea, 1548, the year of her death, contain a curious account of the attentions paid by Seymour to the Princess, and which, whether innocent or not, formed a chief article of his impeachment. After John Dudley, the most gallant soldier and the handsomest man of his time, had been raised to the dignity of Duke of Northumberland and restored to the post of Lord Admiral, which the Protector Somerset had induced him to resign in favour of his brother Thomas Seymour, he became possessor of Chelsea Palace, and rose to supreme power on the ruin and death of the King's uncle. His vain efforts to place Lady Jane Grey upon the throne after Edward's death ended in his execution for treason on August 22, 1553; but his widow retained possession of the Chelsea Palace, and died there in 1555.* In a ms. at the Heralds' College—i. xv. fol. 232—is a description of the funeral, at West Minster, of Anna the daughter of Cleves, as she subscribed herself, who, on the 16th July 1557, died 'at the King and Queene's Majesty's palace of Chelsey beside London.' Honoured with a magnificent funeral by her stepdaughter Mary, the luckless and even-tempered Queen, for whom Holinshed has a good word, was laid in the Minster by the 'tomb of touchstone,' where Soebherht's remains had been solemnly reinterred by Edward II. Fuller appositely points out that no one of Henry's wives, except Anne of Cleves, had a monument, 'and hers,' he observes, 'but half a one.' Though

* She was the mother of Robert Dudley, Queen Elizabeth's favourite, and of Mary, whose son was Sir Philip Sidney. For an interesting account of her, see Collins's *Memorials of Noble Families*. She was buried in Chelsea parish church—St. Luke's.

never finished, the monument, which stands in the sacarium at the south of the altar, may be identified by the initial letters A. and C. frequently repeated upon it. The beautiful tomb of Katharine Parr at Sudeley is modern. In the second year of her reign Elizabeth granted this manor and palace of her childhood's days for life to Anne Duchess of Somerset, widow of the Protector Somerset, who thus succeeded the man to whom the disgrace and death of her husband was popularly attributed, as John Dudley had succeeded him, for whom he had been displaced as Lord Admiral. Each of the three successive owners of this estate and house had died a violent and disgraceful death, and often as the evening gloom thickened in its chambers of ghastly memories may Anne have recalled their familiar images to her fancy, and shuddered as she did so. Here she died at a ripe old age, and was buried (1558) in the Abbey. Her tomb in the chapel of St. Nicholas was set up by her son Lord Hertford, 'in this dolefull dutie carefull and diligent.' In the year following the death of the Protector's widow the royal manor of Chelsea was rented to John, first Lord Stanhope of Harrington, for 13l. 6s. 8d.; he soon after surrendered his patent in favour of Katharine Howard, wife to the Lord Admiral, a staunch Protestant, whom the Virgin Queen had regarded with special favour. The property next passed to the Duke of Hamilton, beheaded in 1648, and his brother, slain at Worcester. The Hamiltons conveyed it to Charles Lord Cheyne (Viscount Newhaven of Scotland), whose son William sold it to Sir Hans Sloane in the year 1712. Devolving upon Charles, second Lord Cadogan of Oakley, at his mar-

riage with Elizabeth, the elder daughter and co-heir of the celebrated naturalist and physician, the manor now vests in his descendants the Earls Cadogan. King Henry VIII.'s palace, a quadrangular building, enclosing a spacious courtyard, was situated in that part of Cheyne Walk near the now steamboat pier which adjoined Winchester House, extending eastwards as far as Don Saltero's coffee-house.

Sir Hans Sloane—the famous physician and naturalist, who founded the British Museum, and whose first professional successes arose, as he confessed, merely from the accident of his playing whist with a lady at a fashionable assembly, when she had a sharp return of an ague fit—Sir Hans was the first English physician who was raised to a baronetage, Queen Anne's favourite medical attendant, and the first naturalist of his day. He expended enormous sums in the collection of his books and rarities, but was of such a penurious disposition that those who visited him in the storied chambers of the old Chelsea Palace and Manor House, to see his world-famous museum, or his excellent botanical gardens, pronounced him the most inhospitable man of his time. His friends ceased to visit him for that reason, and when ninety years of age he complained bitterly that now, when he was old and unable to visit them, he saw nothing of them. Dr. Mortimer, secretary of the Royal Society, of which Sir Hans became president after the death of Sir Isaac Newton, visiting the great physician at Chelsea on one occasion, was specially honoured with an invitation to stay and dine. The feast consisted of one little half-starved fowl and a boiled egg! In the course of dinner the complaint

above mentioned was brought forward, in reply to which the secretary said, 'You should keep a good table.' The old baronet replied angrily,

'Keep a table! keep a table, sir! Would you have me ruin myself? What! public credit is tottering now; and if there should be a national bankruptcy, or a sponge to wipe out the National Debt, you will yet see me in the workhouse. Keep a table, indeed!'

The learning of medical men and the progress of medical science may be gleaned from a story which was often told in this old palace of the royal Bluebeard and his widow, of which rare treasures and rows of books now stored in the British Museum may be regarded as the sole surviving representatives. When Dr. Sloane came to England from Ireland in 1684, Dr. Sydenham, still called, not, as one might imagine, sarcastically, 'the father of English medicine,' was in the zenith of his fame, and to him Hans carried a letter of introduction, which set forth his learning in glowing terms, saying he was a ripe scholar, a good botanist, and a skilful anatomist.

Dr. Sydenham, as Sir Richard Blackmore tells us, built all his maxims and rules of practice upon repeated observations on the nature and properties of disease, and on the power of remedies, and says he vilified learning of which he was no master, simply because he had not it. After reading Dr. Sloane's letter, and eyeing him very attentively, he said,

'All this, sir, is mighty fine; but it won't do! Botany—nonsense! Sir, I have an old woman in Covent Garden who understands botany better. As for anatomy, my butcher can dissect a joint full as well. No, young man—all this is stuff! You must

go to the bedside; it is there only that you can learn to cure disease.'

We pity the patients upon whom the old followers of Dr. Sydenham began their experiments, and think of the horrible confession once openly made by a celebrated oculist, who said he must have spoiled a whole hatful of eyes before he attained the skill requisite for successfully operating upon one. Alas for the owners of the hatful!

Blackmore also tells how when on one occasion he asked Sydenham what books he should read to qualify himself for practice in his profession, the great physician replied, *Don Quixote*. Despite all that has been said to the contrary, one is apt to imagine that 'this divine man,' as one of his biographers calls him, was more in harmony with his position when he commanded a troop of horse in the service of Charles I., than he was when Hans Sloane came to him with his glowing letter of introduction to solicit advice and assistance.

When Sir Hans lived in Bloomsbury Square, Handel visited him, and gave great offence by putting his muffin on one of the doctor's darling books. The composer used to confess that it was 'a gareless trick,' while he added:

'Bud it tid no monsdrous mischief; bud it poded the old poog-vorm treadfully oud of sorts. I offered my best apologies, bud the old miser would not have done with it. If it had been a biscuit 'twould not have mattered none. No! but muffin and pudder! And I said, "Ah, mine God, that was the rub, it was the pudder. Now, mine worthy friend, Sir Hans Sloane, you have a nodable excuse—you may save your doast and pudder, and lay it to that unfeeling gourmandising German; and den I knows it will add some-

thing to your life by sparing your burse.'

Sir Hans Sloane died after a short illness of three days, on the 11th of January 1852, in his ninety-first year. His famous Chelsea botanical garden, in the centre of which was erected his statue, by Ryabrack, was bequeathed to the Apothecaries' Company; his library of fifty thousand volumes, and his museum of costly rarities, he bequeathed to the nation on condition that twenty thousand pounds should be paid to his family.

Passing down the river, we arrive at Kennington, where the kings of the English had a palace from a far remote period until the days of the Stuarts. It is said that the see of Canterbury, exchanging certain lands with the see of Rochester, settled at Lambeth in order to be near the palaces of Kennington and Westminster. The name is derived from Kynninge-tun, the town of the king. In the Conqueror's Survey—Domesday Book, tab. xiii.—it is set forth that 'Teodric the goldsmith holds of the King Chenintune. He held it of King Eadward. Then it was taxed for five hides; now for one hide and three virgates. . . . It was worth, and is worth, three pounds.' Tradition runs it was here that Harthacnut died suddenly at a wedding feast, 'with a tremendous struggle,' in the act of drinking, and that Harold assumed the crown of England. In 1189, Richard I. granted the manor to Sir Robert Percy for twenty marks a year, minus fourpence a day, his salary as keeper and his wages as steward. Matthew Paris chronicles that at a parliament, which met here on the 14th September 1231, a vote passed for the giving of one-fortieth of all movables to the King for discharge of his debt to the Duke of Bretagne.

From Kennington, Edward I. sent to Ireland a copy of the statute *De Malefactoribus in Parcia*; something of the kind, indeed, might have been sent since. Edward III. kept his Christmas here in 1342. He gave it for a residence to the Black Prince, many of whose acts are dated from Kennington. The lane by which he gained the river-stairs is known as Prince's Road. In this palace, his widow, Joan of Kent, adjusted the quarrel between John of Gaunt and the citizens, arising out of his protection of Wycliffe. On Sunday before Candlemas Day, 1377, the citizens held a notable mummary here for the disport of the Prince Richard; but diversions of this kind had received a sudden check, for in the 6th Edward III. all mummers and masquers were ordered to be whipped out of London.

Of other royal inhabitants may be instanced Richard II., with his girl-queen Isabella; John of Gaunt, and his son Henry IV.; Henry VI., who dates a charter from Kennington in 1440; Henry VII.; and, upon the authority of Leland, Katharine of Arragon. King James I. rebuilt the manor-house, which he had bought of Alleyne the actor, and settled the manors of Kennington and Vauxhall upon his eldest son Henry. Henceforward the two manors have appertained to the Duchy of Cornwall. Charles I., when Prince of Wales, lived in a house that had been built upon part of the site of the older palace. The manors he granted severally to Sir Francis Cottington and Sir Noel Caron. Sold in 1649, as being worth 421*l.* a year, the King resumed possession at the Restoration, and leased them to Henry, third Lord Moore, afterwards Earl of Drogheda. The palace stables, by the name of 'the Long Barn' remain-

ed until 1795.* The cellars beneath Park Place retain some of the ancient foundations. By Camden's time, every vestige above-ground of the palace, which stood near the cross north of the junction of the Croydon and Kingston Roads, had disappeared. He writes under date 1607, looking for 'ædes regia Kennington dictæ, quo reges Angliæ olim secedere soliti, sed nunc nec nomen nec rudera invenimus.' The manor-house was pulled down some years ago.

Four centuries after a Christian church had been erected upon the traditional site of the temple to Apollo, Cnut, Wulnoth being abbot, built for himself a palace at Westminster. This, as some chroniclers affirm, was very near to the shore where he rebuked his courtiers. Seehberht, King of the East Saxons, co-founder, according to Bede, with his uncle Æthelberht, of St. Paul's, established what became in 1539 the collegiate church and abbey of St. Peter, amidst the brambles, thickets, and springs of the Isle of Thorns—haunt of the elk and red deer from the neighbouring forests, the *locus terribilis* of Offa's earliest genuine charter. Two of the springs, as Dean Stanley observes in his *Memorials*, flowed until recently in Dean's Yard and St. Margaret's Churchyard; whilst bones of the deer are now and then upturned. Cnut's palace was rebuilt by the monarch, a lineal descendant of Cerdic, and the last of his Saxon race, whose virtues and piety earned for him, in a subsequent age, a rank amongst the canonised saints. Just as at Dunfermline and Holyrood, the abbey and palace grew up side by side in the closest union; the monastery and

church were both within the palace precincts—the church, in the words of Edward III. himself, was the 'capella palatii nostri principalis'; and even to this day our sovereign is crowned 'within our palace at Westminster.* On Wednesday, Innocents' Day, 1065, the King executed the charter of dedication, which yet lies in the Chapter House; and though such a proceeding was unusual upon such a day, the Abbey received its first consecration at human hands from Stigand, in the presence of Harold and his sister Edith, whose consort lay on his death-bed. On the 5th January St. Eadward the Confessor died in a room of his new palace, which, long known by his own name, was afterwards designated the Painted Chamber. The day following he was buried in the Abbey, where his shrine has ever since formed the central feature of veneration.† Since the fire of 1834 left very little of the old palace, excepting the hall of the Red King as reconstructed by Richard II., it will be convenient to show how the former

* The tapestry at Bayeux affords a quaint exposition of this, in the figure that stands upon a ladder reaching from the roof of the palace to the abbey, and leans forward to grasp the weather-cock of the latter in his hand.

† It is still visited by devout Roman Catholics. The paintings in the Chamber of the history of the Maccabees, with episodes—as in the sculptures on the screen in St. Eadward's Chapel—in the life of the holy King, are deemed to have been of the time of King Henry III., who paid Odo, a goldsmith, 4*l.* 10*s.* for 'pictures to be done in the King's chamber.' In the ceremonial for the marriage of Richard Duke of York to the Lady Anne Mowbray—15th January 1477—the room is styled St. Eadward's Chamber; and so is it called as the scene of a parliament held here on the 21st May 1864. The ms. Itinerary of Simon Simeon and Hugo the Illuminator, now in the library of Corpus College, Cambridge, alludes to the frescoes. Coke, in his Fourth Institute, says the parliament causes were anciently held in the Chambre Dépeint, or St. Edward's Chamber.

* A good view of the Barn will be found in Allen's *History of Lambeth*, 1827.

buildings were grouped around it. At its south-eastern corner, and perpendicularly with its length, was St. Stephen's Chapel, dedicated by King Stephen to the proto-martyr, but rebuilt during the period 1330-52. Hither the Commons removed from the Chapter House of the Abbey in 1547 (1st Edward VI.). To the east stood the range of buildings known as the Speaker's house, having a water-gate, built by Richard II., where the Lord Mayor would disembark on the occasion of his presentation at the Court of Exchequer. Northwards of these, and in the south-eastern angle of New Palace Yard, was the Star Chamber. The Court of Requests, which, upon the legislative union with Ireland, served as a House of Lords, was at the south of the Hall. South of this again, and aligned with the river's bank, was the original hall of the Confessor's palace—the Whitehall, used as the first House of Lords, between the Painted Chamber on the north and the Prince's Chamber to the south. The interior is depicted in Copley's painting, in the national collection, of 'The Death of the Earl of Chatham,' who was attacked by his last illness whilst inveighing against the independence of the American colonies. The Lords took with them to the more commodious Court of Requests the celebrated tapestry of the defeat of the Armada. It had been worked under the direction of Charles, first Earl of Nottingham (better known as Lord Howard of Effingham), by Francis Spiering, from the designs of Cornelius Vroom, at a cost of 1628*l*. In the southern end of the Court of Requests three arches were lately discovered, the oldest remains of the palace—older, probably, than St. Eadward's time. Two were made into windows in

1800, the third being hidden again by some pre-structure. The great fire totally destroyed these valuable memorials. The Prince's Chamber was hung with a singular piece of tapestry representing the birth of Queen Elizabeth. The Cotton Garden filled the space between the Painted Chamber and the chapel. By the south-western corner of the hall was a room of date Richard II., that was given up as a common room for the servants of members. Westwards the palace buildings extended to the King's Jewel House, latterly the Parliament Office, a rectangular stone tower at the north-eastern corner of the Infirmary, now the College, Garden, and behind Abingdon Street, formerly Dirty Lane. A garden entered from the north by a gate in St. Margaret's Lane, and having an exit into Lindsey Lane towards Millbank, occupied the site of Old Palace Yard.* Opposite to the end of Great College Street was the King's slaughter-house for supplying the palace. The foundations were visible one hundred years since. The first chapel in the palace was that of St. Eadward, near the Cotton Garden, upon the site of the later Cotton House. In the reign of William Rufus, Hugo Flory was confirmed as Abbot of Canterbury 'in the King's Chapel at Westminster' (*Chronica*, W. Thorn). St. Stephen's Chapel, as rebuilt

* Lindsey Lane, so named from the house—taken down in 1720—on its western side of Lord Lindsey, crossed Great College Street by the water-mill over the Long or Mill Ditch, the ditch flowing around the northern side of Thorney Island, fed by the Ay, or Aye, from Hampstead, and is represented by the lake in St. James's Park, to which the descent was marked by the steps leading from Chapel Place—Judge Jeffrey's house—in Delahay Street. It ran beneath Great College Street into the river at Queen's Bridge. The eastern outlet was at Channel (Cannon) Row.

by Edward III., was always considered to afford a unique example of Decorated architecture. The original charter of endowment by letters patent, as drawn up by William Edendon (who was made Bishop of Winchester in 1346), and dated 6th August 1348, 22nd Edward III., may be found in Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. v. fol. 631. The design was that of the master-mason, Thomas of Canterbury. The common mistake of imputing it to William of Wykeham, who, however, did build Windsor Castle for this same king, is sufficiently corrected by the fact that he was but six years of age when the rebuilding of St. Stephen's Chapel was begun. This chapel is believed, and upon good grounds, to have been decorated with paintings even in King Edward I.'s reign. Adapted for the Commons in 1547, it was again altered in the last year of the last century (1800), and enlarged by reducing the walls, which were more than three feet in thickness, from within. The removal of the wainscot on the 11th August revealed some mural and panel paintings which filled the antiquarian world with wonder and delight. These were of Edward III.'s period. A careful examination of the works themselves and of the account-rolls of the time conclusively demonstrated them to be in oils, and of a date about sixty years prior to the supposed invention or revival of painting in that medium by John Van Eyck. The pictures were diligently copied by Mr. J. T. Smith until their final destruction six weeks afterwards. They were the work of seventy-six artists, of whom two only were not natives of this country. A view of the interior in the early part of this century is to be seen in a large picture at the National Portrait Gallery; whilst descriptions of the

chapel are given in Mackenzie's work, and in J. T. Smith's *Westminster*, with numerous coloured illustrations of the paintings, sculpture, and glass. The latter author shows that Stow's account of the chapel and its site is untrustworthy in many material particulars. A drawing of Gravelot, of 1742, engraved by W. J. White, should also be mentioned. The chapel was upon the first floor; the restored crypt yet survives upon the ground floor, beneath the now St. Stephen's Hall. When it was given to the Commons, the revenues of the collegiate foundation, as reconstituted by Edward III., amounted to nearly 1100*l.* yearly. The Speaker's House in St. Stephen's Court embodied the chapel cloisters, as renewed in 1350, the chapel chapter-house, and a square stone tower on the east of the great hall. In its most modern phase the Star Chamber was an Elizabethan building with gables of date 1602. A fine engraving, from an iron plate, of the ceiling of its principal room is in Smith's work. The popularly received story must yield to the fact that its name is derived from the *starra*—*Hebraicè*, *shetâr*—or Jewish covenants which Richard I. deposited here. The judicial court of Star Chamber set up by Henry VIII. was abolished on the 1st August 1641. Prynne's prosecution by Attorney-General Noy is the most famous of its records. The first House of Lords was the very room through whose wall Richard with the lion's heart had a way cut that he might, without diverting his face, make straight for Portsmouth against Philip of France, who had invaded Normandy. They met at Gisors, where our King gave his army the parole, '*Dieu et mon droit.*' His equestrian statue by Marochetti,

a theatrical and inadequate composition, stands hard by in Old Palace Yard. A doorway in a court, by the eastern end of the Prince's Chamber, opened into the cellars hired by Catesby and his fellow-conspirators. Their antiquity was mentioned by the Earl of Northampton, who presided at the Jesuit Garnet's trial. The thickness of the wall—nine feet—between the vaults and the basement of the House of Lords accounts for the long time the conspirators took to make their way through, and the large amount of gunpowder which they thought necessary for their purpose, being thirty-six barrels in all. It is not a matter of common knowledge that the letter which led to their discovery was penned by Mary, wife to Thomas Abington (whence Abington Street), of Hinlip, county Worcester, and eldest daughter of Lord Morley, father of the Lord Montague. Affection for a brother prompted the warning which she endeavoured so to frame as to avert the detection of her husband. Of the conspirators, Winter, Rockwood, Cayes, and Fawkes were executed in Old Palace Yard, on Friday, 31st January 1606.* Barely twelve years later, Raleigh, the brightest jewel in his sovereign's crown, suffered on the same spot; he now lies with his son Carew beneath the altar of St. Margaret's Church. Here, on the 30th June 1637, Bastwick, Burton, and Prynne stood in the pillory; and in more troublous times the Duke of Hamilton, with the Lords Capel and Holland, was beheaded. The King's Jewel House should be noticed, if it be only for the circumstance that the abbot conveyed it, 7th June 1377, to

* See the *Weekly News* of the following Monday; and a very scarce pamphlet, signed 'T. W.', entitled *The Arraignment and Execution of the late Traitors*, 4to, London, 1606.

Edward III. in exchange for a license to receive and purchase lands to the extent of 40*l.* in expressed despite of the then first statute of mortmain, 7th Edward I., 1279. The grant exists in the chartulary *Niger Quaternus*, fol. 70, of the Minster archives. This fine old relic comprises the primitive refectory and dormitory used by the monks during the rebuilding by the Confessor. It was occupied in like manner by the Speaker for many months after the fire of 1834. Abbot Litlington refitted the interior, and the beautiful vaulting of the larger of the two lower rooms is of his time (1360). The upper chamber has a good chestnut roof. In Edward VI.'s time the Tower was a royal wardrobe, as is clear from the Harl. ms. No. 1419, which gives an inventory of the late King's apparel there. It next served as a storehouse for the Peers' records, and latterly for the standard weights and measures. The more ancient of the latter are now kept at South Kensington, the whole of the Tower being required for the modern appliances, including the Whitworth gauges and foreign standards, of the Standards Department of the Board of Trade. The view of the Victoria Tower, the College Garden and Abbey, with the picturesque houses of the canons, from its roof is very fine. The Tower itself is so hemmed in by buildings on two sides and an elbow of the old wall on the others that its proportions are not plainly visible; it may, however, be best seen from the mews in Great College Street. The contemplated destruction of this ancient building is much to be regretted.* At right angles with the Painted Chamber was the Confessor's

* Mr. Chaney, the keeper, very kindly permitted me to inspect the interior of the Tower.

oratory, where in Strype's day the library collected by Sir Robert Cotton was kept. Deposited in 1712 at Essex House, the home of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, on the site of the once Outer Temple, the Cottonian mss. were transferred to Ashburnham House (once known as the Dean's House) in Little Dean's Yard, which suffered by fire in 1731. 'Doctor Bob,' head-master of Westminster School, brother to John Freind, the friend of Atterbury, whose release from the Tower of London Dr. Mead demanded before he would attend Walpole, says he saw Bentley, the King's librarian, in his dressing-gown and full-bottomed wig rescuing the Alexandrine ms. of the New Testament from the flames. Lodged for a while in the Abbey library, in the dormitory over the eastern cloister and Pyx Chapel, the books and mss. were ultimately taken to the British Museum. During his trial King Charles I. was lodged in the Cotton Garden. In the vaults of the Painted Chamber was a very curious triangular-headed doorway of the Confessor's time. After the fire of 1834 it was roofed in and the walls raised, that it might serve as a temporary house for the Commons. In the Painted Chamber Marten and Cromwell were guilty of the shocking indecency with which they signed the warrant for the King's execution; and here Cromwell's daughter, Eliza Claypole, and Chatham and William Pitt, lay in state. The Cage Chamber was by the Cotton Garden at the riverside. The name is due to the fact that the sovereign's caged birds were kept here. A story runs that King Henry VIII's favourite parrot fell one day into the water, screaming, 'A boat! a boat for twenty pounds!' The waterman

who saved the bird was promised he might have whatever reward the parrot should allot him, and the bird forthwith called out, 'Give the knave a groat!'

'The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus; the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings; the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers; the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment; the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame.' So writes Macaulay of the scene of Warren Hastings's impeachment. The hall which then echoed with the eloquence of Sheridan and Burke, of Fox and Grey; from whose floor a Stuart might have raised the gauntlet of the sovereign's champion; where Edward III. received the royal captive of Poitiers; whence men like Wallace and Raleigh, More and Fisher, Buckingham and Laud, went to their deaths; where the Queens of Scotland, France, and England obtained Henry's clemency for the rebellious apprentices, and the seven bishops were acquitted—this venerable pile, hung with the banners captured at Naseby, Worcester, Preston, and Dunbar, heard sentence passed upon those peers who suffered on Tower Hill for their fidelity to him they deemed their king. The building, as it now stands, was erected in 1396; the contract, dated the preceding year, is printed in Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. vii. fols. 794-5; it forms, in his own words, but a small part of the new palace which Richard II. proposed for himself. But here, his projects frustrated,

that monarch resigned his crown to Bolingbroke. Its appropriation for the Courts of Law dates from the Conquest.* They were permanently established here in the ninth year of King Henry III. The literature of the last three centuries abounds with allusions to the resort hither of litigants and lawyers. The Court of Chancery, so called from the *cancelli*, or latticed screens which separated it from the public, and the Court of Queen's Bench sat at the southern end, beneath the great window, to the west and east respectively of the present St. Stephen's porch. The Common Pleas and Exchequer were ranged along the western wall. A drawing of Gravelot's, engraved by C. Moseley, *circa* 1750, shows this internal arrangement, together with the banners and booksellers' and seamstresses' shops, which lined the hall on either side. The rent and profits of the stalls belonged to the wardens of the Fleet. Kent's buildings (of 1732) along the western side were somewhat in keeping with the buildings which formerly stood to the north of St. Margaret's Church: their demolition leaves us in the difficulty—how best to replace them and Soane's Law Courts in the rear? A wall, with a gate at each corner, once enclosed three sides of New Palace Yard. The only gate existing in Maitland's time was that leading to Westminster bridge, *i.e.* stairs. The north-eastern gate opened upon the Woolstaple, at foot of the present bridge. Highgate, a beautiful work of King Richard III., was at the west end of Union, now Bridge, Street; it was taken down in the year 1706, as in 1731 was that at the northern end of St. Margaret's Lane. On the northern side of

the yard, in front of the hall, stood the bell or clock tower. This and the central fountain form conspicuous objects in Hollar's view (1647). The bell-tower was pulled down in the year 1715. It is generally credited that 'Great Tom' of Westminster entered into the composition of what until the other day was the great bell at St. Paul's. But this is not the case, for when William III. gave Great Tom to St. Paul's, the bell, having been injured in *transitu*, was recast, and soon afterwards was broken by some ill-advised experiments with an iron hammer. Richard Phelps cast anew, of fresh metal, the big bell which bears his name. An octagonal tower at the north of the Law Courts was all that remained of the buildings of Elizabeth's time, which stood along the southern side of the yard and partially obscured the hall. This old palace—where St. Eadward had entertained his cousin the Norman—which had been for many years the favourite home of King Henry III., where King Edward I. was born and King Edward IV. died—having suffered by repeated fires and neglect, ceased to be a royal residence in 1532, when Henry VIII. took up his abode in Whitehall.* But Queen Elizabeth lived here for awhile; what had been her bedroom was sometimes used by the Court of Exchequer. Over the gallery at the north end of the hall was her concert and breakfast room; and above this again the nursery of Henry VIII.'s children. The fire which finally destroyed a building that had been so intimately associated with the history of our country for eight

* Ælfric, Abbot of Peterborough, was tried here in 1069.

* See, in Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, numerous mandates, covering the period Henry III. to Richard II., for the beautifying and fitting of the interior.

hundred years, and longer, broke out on the night of the 16th October 1834, originating in the burning of the piles of tally-sticks—their use dating from the Conquest—on which for centuries past the accounts of the Houses had been kept.

The former Lady Chapel of the Abbey was dedicated, as is also "Henry VII.'s Chapel," to St. Mary the Virgin. In the garden stood a house in which Ben Jonson lived, and another that was leased to Chaucer in 1399—the year preceding his death—for 53s. 4d. per annum, he being then Clerk of the Works to Richard II. for the rebuildings at Westminster and Windsor. Chaucer's house and the old Rose tavern were pulled down in 1502.

"Heaven" and "Hell"* were two mean ale-houses, abutting on Westminster Hall. They are mentioned, together with a third house called "Purgatory," where a ducking-stool was kept, in a grant of the 1st Henry VII. These three notorious taverns are severally alluded to by Fuller, Butler, Pepys, and Strype. When Pride purged the Parliament he locked up the forty-one excepted members for the night in "Hell." I will conclude this first part of my article by stating that views and plans of some of the places I have mentioned may be seen in Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata*; Pennant's *London*, 4to, 1793; J. T. Smith's *Westminster*, 1807; and in the Crace and other Collections, British Museum.

W. E. MILLIKEN.

* 'Subtle. Her Grace would have you eat no more Woolpack pies nor Dagger frumety.

'Dol. Nor break his fast in Heaven and Hell.'—*The Alchemist*, act v. sc. 2.

THE WAY WE LOVE NOW.

A Romance of the Nineteenth Century.

RIVER, river, gentle river,
Flowing through those pleasant
meads,
Where the rushes quake and quiver
To each whisper of the breeze ;

River, with thy limpid shallows,
And thy glittering pebbly bed,
Water-lilies—golden mallows—
Cloud and sunshine overhead ;

There, along thy fragrant margin,
In the glorious summer days,
Once there strayed a pair of lovers,
Wandering in a dreamy haze.

She was, O, divinely pretty !
For her hair was purest gold,
And her form and every feature
Fashioned in a fairy mould.

She was clever, O, so clever !
With a stifled pang she knew
Years of desperate toil could never
Make her lover half as blue.

And she pondered and reflected,
Wandering by the river brink,
'If he should not be rejected,
Could I teach him how to think ?'

He was tall, and strong, and manly,
And his coat was made by Poole,
And although he was a dandy,
Yet he did not look a fool.

For he had a frank expression
That conveyed some strength of will,
And his voice was soft and pleasing,
And his eyes were better still.

But one lesson life had taught him,
And he conned it every day,
With firm purpose he would struggle
Not to throw himself away.

So he pondered and reflected,
As he wandered by her side,
'Yes, she's very nice, 'tis certain,
But the world is very wide ;

And perhaps I might do better—
Anyhow there's lots of time ;
Foolishly myself to fetter
Would, I take it, be a crime.'

So this youth resolved to travel,
Till his mind was full well stored,
Studying with minute attention
All the girls he met abroad.

Murmuring to the gentle river,
Now the maiden, all alone,
Thought, with just a little shiver,
How those pleasant days had flown.

Then there came another suitor,
With a crumpled parchment face,
By statistics overwhelming
Proving courtship's out of place.

Thus he came with starch and buckram,
Keen devotion to red tape,
Proudly owning that he hated
Sentiment in any shape.

But he found her more efficient
Than secretaries he had tried,
And her winsome grace sufficient
Even for a statesman's bride.

River, river, gentle river,
Stealing through the woods and dells,
On a frosty winter morning
Came the sound of marriage-bells.

And she copied speeches for him,
Wrongs of millions to redress,
And she studied all the Blue-books,
And—she was a great success.

For she took to model farming,
Triumphed in the butter prize ;
While her ladyship was churning,
Rustics stared with open eyes.

But she scorned all adulation,
Eager now to educate
Those great masses of the nation,
Dunces made by cruel Fate.

Then she held Blue Ribbon meetings,
And wrote essays by the score,
Full of philanthropic greetings,
Crammed with philosophic lore.

But at times when she is weary,
And her pretty head will ache,
Strange misgivings sometimes haunt
her

That she made a great mistake !

And that youth, resolved to travel,
Piccadilly saw once more,
Foolishly disposed to cavil,
Voting all he'd seen a bore.

Now he has a set of chambers,
Full of antique china jars ;
Visits all the nicest people,
And—he smokes the best cigars.

When towards the fireside gathering,
At the evening hour of rest,
Tired men are coming homewards
To the greeting they love best,

With a peevish air he'll utter,
'Life is but a sorry farce ;'
Friends have even heard him mutter,
'Hang it all ! I've been an ass.'

E. C.

SHOOTING.

THE 1st of September is a day more looked forward to by the general sporting public than any other. August 12th and October 1st may be eagerly anticipated by the wealthy sportsman, but September 1st is the day most generally looked forward to. Nor is the reason difficult to discover. Partridge-shooting is comparatively the cheapest of sports. So long as vermin is kept down by trapping, and the fields properly bushed in the season, to prevent the birds being netted, a fair number are sure to be found. There are few better or more exciting sports than partridge-driving. People who have never tried, and those who have tried and failed, affect to despise it; but, in spite of all, it is an excellent sport, if only for the reason that all can join in it. The old and young, the weak and strong, and even ladies, honour the stands with their presence; though this cannot be said to add to the accuracy of the shooting, for partridge-driving arrangements are usually made so as to arrive at the first set of stands somewhere about eleven. Here the head-keeper is met, who, after giving directions about watching particular lines, and begging that gentlemen will not put up their heads too soon, but keep down and 'give the birds a chance,' as he calls it, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, I suppose, mounts his old horse and trots off after the drivers, receiving, first of all, you may be sure, some chaff from the youngsters about his horse and his seat, to which

he good-humouredly rejoins that 'he hopes they will shoot better than he can ride.'

The party now disperse to their several stands, each one accompanied by his loader, and, as you stroll down with your old loader, he greatly amuses you by his observations on the party and shrewd forecast of their respective powers. In a short time the distant sound of a horn is heard, which makes your old man break off his stories and reflections altogether, as he knows it is the signal for the line of drivers to start; you yourself peer eagerly through the screen, though really knowing that there is no chance of a shot for a long time yet. Presently a series of unearthly yells are heard, as some obstinate covey rises and breaks back over the drivers' heads. And here let me remark that the arrangement of a successful drive requires a great deal of forethought and knowledge; the wind and sun must be studied, and also the habits of the birds. Partridges are thorough Tories, and like to take the same line that their fathers before them did, so it is useless to try to drive them far out of it.

Presently, as you are looking through the screen, a dark object comes into view that appears rather like a bumble bee; in another second you perceive it is an old cock French partridge, when, just as you are in the act of firing, down drops the bird, and commences running like a racehorse. Naturally you bring your gun down, but the old loader whis-

pers, 'Shoot un, sir, shoot un; he be the blarmed old cock, and mayhap, if you kills un, t'others will be obliged to fly;' so you pot him, and the cloud of feathers that comes out is wonderful. A novice would think that it was blown to bits; but the fact is nothing of the kind has happened, the cloud being caused by the great thickness of plumage. It is very curious to shoot one in snow: the stream of feathers lying on it looks as if a small pillow had been ripped open.

Soon a distant cry of 'Mark over!' showing that a covey has risen and is coming right for the stands, puts every one on the *qui vive*. Here they come straight for the man on the right, and you feel almost inclined to envy his chance, when suddenly the covey mount straight up like so many sky-rockets; your friend, fresh to the sport, has put up his head just a minute or so too soon, and the birds saw him. Firing a hasty right and left as they pass over, he is greatly surprised at a bird falling nearly on the top of him, the fact being that the two he shot at were clean missed, but one of the hindmost of the covey flew into the shot. And now the scene begins to be very interesting; the birds are beginning to run out of the roots on to the large stubble in front, not by ones and twos, but by twenties at a time, the French birds of course being first. It is most curious to notice their dodges—how they run about looking for places to hide in, and when they discover the least shelter drop down into it at once; but you cannot spare much attention to them, as the coveys begin to rise thick and fast, and cries of 'Mark over!' are incessant. The work now begins to be very exciting, and the fusillade kept up reminds one of the commovement

of a general action, so sustained is it. Some of the younger hands, thoroughly overcome by the excitement of their first drive, are firing wildly, as if they thought they should not have a second chance. By way of contrast, look at the man stationed three or four stands from you, and see the machine-like regularity with which he knocks the birds over; no flurry of any sort, the gun brought up easily, the two sharp reports, and a brace of birds tumbling; the empty piece handed to the loader, and the other gun taken and discharged in the same cool way with the like unfailing result. Both master and man are perfect specimens of their kind, the former as a shot and the latter as a loader. And now, as the drivers get further through the roots, the hares begin to bolt out, running wildly in every direction, utterly bewildered at the shouts and yells that greet them. Not many are shot at except by those who have utterly muffed the birds, and are anxious to show that they can hit something. Next, as the drivers come out on to the stubble, the French birds begin to get up by ones and twos. Many of these get off, for they rise from such queer places, often close to the stands.

The first drive being over, the head-keeper comes up to see the game collected, pausing by the stands of those who have been unlucky, and gravely telling their loaders that they 'need not trouble to pick up their master's birds,' as he always sees to that; whereupon very frequently the occupier tries to explain how the birds twisted or the sun was in his eyes, or makes one of the thousand excuses that men give for missing. The game being now collected, the party stroll off to the next set of stands, and the

same thing goes on again, with the exception that some of the excited sportsmen cool down a little, and, in consequence, improve in their shooting. Driving is the least fatiguing of any sport to the shooters, the drivers having to go such long rounds to their different starting-points that there is not the least need to hurry from stand to stand, but you can pick your way and go by the easiest route. The actual shooting, however, is difficult; it requires skill and coolness to get the exact knack of the thing. I well remember, after one drive, a man, who really was a remarkably good shot over dogs or walking up birds, coming to me with an expression of the greatest disgust on his face, and saying, 'I have actually missed eight shots running!' However, he soon got into the way of it; but at first you do not discover the pace the birds go at, and are rather bothered by their coming right at you.

After a morning's driving very good sport can be got in the afternoon by going out with a couple of steady spaniels after the French partridges. You will find these birds have hidden themselves in the most wonderful places, under clods and small lumps of hedge-cuttings, in tufts of grass, holes by gate-posts; in fact, there is no telling where they may have got to. A rabbit-hole is a very favourite place; so if one of your dogs seems inclined to stop and scratch at one, do not tell your keeper to 'call the tiresome beast off,' as he is always after rabbits, for it is ten to one that a Frenchman has taken refuge there. You will often find that the birds have got down almost to the end of the hole. However, the birds give capital sport, as they rise out of such unexpected places that you must always be ready for a shot.

Besides the sport, it is an excellent way of keeping these 'pests' down; for they really are 'pests,' driving about the English birds in the breeding season, and bothering your dogs awfully in the beginnings of the shooting season by their habits of running; indeed, until driving commences, you hardly ever kill a Frenchman; but this is not much of a loss, as when they are shot they are not worth eating. One thing, you can send them away as presents to people who do not know their merits, and are very much pleased with them on account of their size and the beauty of their plumage, doubtless putting down their hardness and want of flavour to their cook!

But partridge-shooting *par excellence* is over dogs. It is a treat indeed to see a brace of well-broken pointers or setters at work: the speed with which they quarter their ground, and yet their perfect steadiness; to see the dog that finds the game stop dead in his gallop, limbs all rigid, as if he was turned into stone, ears pricked and eyes almost starting out of his head with excitement; then his companion backing steadily, the attitude the same, but no eagerness shown; the rapid shots, and the dogs both down in an instant,—all this is delightful to witness, but is very seldom seen nowadays. After the first week dogs are very little use, the birds will not lie to them; high farming, with its machine-cut stubbles, clean ploughs, and widely-drilled root-crops, has almost abolished shooting over dogs. The birds will not wait on the bare stubbles, and if you get them into roots, the rattle of the leaves when the dogs are at work is a signal for their flight. The only chance is where seeds have been sown in barley; then the reaping-machine cannot be set very low or it clogs,

and in this there is fair lying; but as for the fine stubbles knee-high that our fathers enjoyed, and the broadcast turnips—why, they have gone, and pointers and setters have, alas, nearly disappeared with them.

When the birds have become so wild that they will not lie to the dogs at all, the best and most sportsmanlike way is to walk them up; but to do this with any success requires a man to be in excellent training. Walking over fallows deeply ploughed by steam-power is no joke, and the birds invariably select these. Your plan is to have about four guns and five keepers or beaters, and take the fields in line, of course driving in the direction of any pieces of cole-seed, mustard, or roots that you may have on your ground; for when once the birds get into these, particularly into cole-seed, they will remain the rest of the day. It is surprising how many are bagged when walking: sometimes the coveys seem bothered by the line of men, and will rise within an easy shot; but they often seem to know by some sort of intuition the bad shot of the party, and will allow him to get fairly into the middle of them, when they rise with a rush, and fly off none the worse for his too hurried shots.

In this sport there is not half the firing to be heard which there is in 'driving'; but the deadly single shot or the steady double is heard pretty regularly, and the bag at the end of the day is usually heavier. You commonly find that a very fair bag is made before entering the cole-seed or roots where the coveys have principally gone; but when this cover is entered, unless very unlucky, you may fairly reckon on the bag being doubled, for the birds cannot run much, and are

forced to rise fairly, so that even a moderate shot ought to be pretty sure of his birds. One great advantage of this kind of shooting is that so few birds get away wounded; as a rule they are either dropped at once or get off scot-free, whereas in 'driving' an immense number go away wounded; and if there are any crows in the district, it is most curious to see them on the day after a 'drive' hunting the fields regularly and systematically after the cripples.

There is still another method of partridge-shooting, but this mode is only adopted by wealthy stock-brokers, city, and brand-new peers. The keepers, with a strong force of beaters, are sent out to drive the birds into cover, and, when there, men are left as stops to keep the birds from straying out; then about twelve the party drive up in wagonettes, well wrapped up, and with plenty of foot-warmers, &c., to the nearest piece of cover, get out, take their guns, and walk right through it, blazing at everything that shows itself; when they have done one field, they get into their carriages and drive to the next, where the same amusement is carried on; then comes hot lunch at the nearest keeper's house, which lasts for an hour or more, and the afternoon sport is a repetition of the morning's. There is no stopping to pick up the game,—keepers are left behind for that, and are told to take their guns, so as to stop any cripples, the 'writing between the lines' being in this case that they are to kill all they can, so as to make the bag sound better at the end of the day.

As partridge-shooting is one of the cheapest amusements, pheasant-shooting, on the other hand, is one of the dearest. What with feeding the young birds and doc-

toring them, and the constant watching they require when they are turned into the cover; and lastly, the large staff of beaters, the calculation of ten shillings per head for every one killed is not far beyond the mark. Pheasant-shooting can really only be managed by one method, and that is by having a body of well-trained beaters; so cunning are these birds that there is no chance of giving your friends the desired sport, if you do not have them. It is true a very pleasant day may often be had on the outskirts of your grounds by going round with some well-broken spaniels; but for real pheasant-shooting beaters are indispensable. A well-arranged and successful beat requires almost as much generalship as an Ashanti campaign. The covers must be watched from the earliest season, but the watchers must show themselves as little as possible; if the pheasants come out, they should put them back by rattling a stick or shaking some branches, for by showing themselves the chances are that the pheasants would fly off at once, but the rattle of a stick merely makes them run back into cover. Then the corners where they are to rise must be netted most carefully, perfect silence being kept, and as little noise of any kind made as possible. When the beat has actually commenced not a point must be left unguarded, the smallest ditch or grip with grass in it must have a 'stop' at it, and any hare or rabbit runs that there may be must be stopped also. The boys who act as 'stops' have to be well drilled in their parts, just to keep a subdued kind of rattle with their two short sticks, and by no means to strike the bushes in cover—merely to use their sticks as a kind of castanet. In fact, pheasants are at once the keeper's

greatest pride and greatest plague, from the time when he has to guard the wild birds' nests against egg-stealers, and to watch those brought up under hens—ever on the look-out for gapes or croup when they are quite young, and then when older, and turned into the covers, on the watch for poachers or vermin, until the grand shooting-day; and even until that is over his anxiety is unceasing. It is very difficult to prevent them straying, particularly in a district where there are many oaks, as they will, however well fed, roam after acorns. And then to insure there being a proper quantity of pheasants in the required places is no easy work. With all the pains possible, it is extraordinary how they will stray away. Two instances of this straying propensity came under my individual notice.

I was staying with a large party at a friend's house for pheasant-shooting, and as the covers had not been beaten before, my friend was sanguine of some first-rate sport, knowing the large number of pheasants that had been reared, and the trouble that had been taken with them. We went out, and everything seemed to promise an excellent day's shooting; the pheasants were all reported safe the night before, and 'stops' had been sent out early to prevent them straying, nets put down, and all complete. Well, the first cover that was beaten yielded only about thirty or forty pheasants, instead of three or four times that number, and the second and third the same. The host looked much annoyed, and his keeper almost heart-broken; and this kind of sport continued until the afternoon, when my friend called up the keeper, and in desperation ordered him to beat a small covert standing by itself about three-

quarters of a mile off. The man said he did not think it was any use, as no pheasants were ever there; however, as his master wished it, it should be done, and he sent off some men to put down the nets very carefully. When we came up the under-keeper said there certainly were some pheasants there, though he had never known them to be in that place before; so we began, and very soon found that they had nearly all migrated from their usual quarters to this place, above four hundred being killed in this small cover. How they got there no one could guess; there were not any connecting hedgerows or ploughed fields, and they had roosted in their usual places.

The second case occurred to myself. I wished to beat a small cover of my own of about four acres, as we knew there were some pheasants there, and being an outlying one it was not altogether safe; so I gave orders that the place should be netted, and 'stops,' &c., sent out, and then went and beat it, but to my great surprise found scarcely anything. The keeper was utterly puzzled too; we tried all the likely spots round with no result, and I came to the conclusion that some poachers must have beaten the wood very early that day. However, as we were going off, the quick eye of my keeper detected a pheasant running in an old grassy lane near, and we resolved to try this; and well it was we did; every bush and tuft of grass seemed to hold a pheasant, and we made a capital bag, killing all but one, to my keeper's great satisfaction. Several more were got than the number he had mentally put down for the cover to yield; however, in this case we at length detected the way they had got out. The end of the wood had been netted,

and a 'stop' put on one side where there was an old ditch; but on the other a little grip with long grass in it, leading from the cover across a field to the old lane, had been left unguarded, as the net was thought to have been fastened down so closely that nothing could get out; but the pheasants found the weak place, and undoubtedly strayed by it.

To insure a good day's pheasant-shooting, thoroughly trained beaters are absolutely necessary; and it is equally needful that the guns should remain where they are posted, or if they are to move, only do so exactly as the head-keeper directs. Nothing is more annoying, both to master and keeper, than having a good day spoiled because two or three of the guns will get together to hear or tell the last new story, and consequently let the pheasants escape by not being at their proper posts. If you have the good fortune to be placed by the net at the end of the beat, you will find that, besides having the best place for sport, great amusement can be derived by noticing the behaviour of the various kinds of game as they come up to it. Soon after you have taken your position, the rattle of sticks is heard, showing that the beat has begun, and shortly a suppressed shout indicates that a rabbit is up; for the best-trained beaters in England cannot resist giving a shout at the sight of one, and if they are a scratch lot, the yells that greet its appearance could not be exceeded if half a dozen foxes had been unkenelled at once. They will allow a pheasant or woodcock, or, in fact, any other kind of game, to get away silently; but a rabbit is too much for them—why, I do not know; but such is the fact. In a short time something may be heard coming very

rapidly towards the net, and in a minute a splendid old cock-pheasant appears, who runs right up to it; then, suddenly catching sight of you, back he goes like a racehorse, and you hear the whirr as he rises on meeting the line of beaters, and the cry of 'Mark back,' succeeded as a rule by two rapid shots, sometimes only by a single one, followed by a crash as he comes down through the trees. Next a lot of hen-pheasants come pattering along, crouching as they run with outstretched neck. These come up very quietly, and begin to examine the net closely, walking along it, trying whether they can find a place to pass underneath, and, if they do, they infallibly lead all the rest away; but, failing this, they squat down and become at once almost invisible; so exactly does their plumage assimilate itself to the dead leaves that, unless you happen to catch their eye, you would never detect them. Then come a lot of young cocks in a terrible flurry, running here, there, and everywhere, occasionally twisting round like teetotums; these, too, at length squat, picking out tufts of brake or grass, where their dark heads are covered, and their back and long tail-feathers just match the stuff they are lying in. Presently some hares come along, and these are all listening so intently to the beaters, and looking back as well, that they blunder against the net, greatly to their astonishment; for they sit up and stare at it, and then trot away to see if they can make off by one of their usual runs; failing in this, they lie down in some of the thickest cover, hoping to escape by this plan. Numerous rabbits come hopping along, and, meeting the net, turn and hide themselves in stumps or any other place they can find. And really, as the beat-

ers come nearer and nearer, you would never imagine the quantity of game there is; a novice would at once declare there was none, so absolutely motionless does it remain until it is forced up; and then, although you have been at the post all the time, the quantity seems quite astonishing. Pheasants begin to whirr up, at first by twos and threes, and then almost by scores at a time, and the firing is incessant; it seems now that every tuft of grass or piece of fern has a pheasant under it; but in spite of the beaters, several old cocks run back between them, being far too clever to rise and be shot at, knowing that a beater may almost as well strike at a flash of lightning as at an old cock running.

I may here remark that some of these old cocks will often escape being killed season after season by some dodge or other. In a cover of my own there was an old cock-pheasant who lived between six and seven years, always escaping the guns. We used to drive this cover regularly to the same point, and just before the beaters had finished, this old fellow would get up close to the outside hedge, rising above the underwood as if he would give an excellent shot; but, just as you thought he was as good as bagged, closing his wings, he would drop into the field close to the hedge, turn round, and run back like a racer, hopping over the fence again into the cover just behind the beaters. He practised this dodgesuccessfully for several years; but at length the keeper complained so much that he disturbed the cover, and would not let any other bird come near, that I had to devise means to kill him, which was effected by driving the cover the opposite way to which he was accustomed. The old fellow was

so bewildered that he rose, gave a fair shot, and was killed. A more splendid bird than he was could scarcely have been seen—in full plumage, a broad and perfect white ring round his neck, and spurs an inch long, and as sharp and hard as if they had been made of iron.

Very amusing it is, too, to watch the shooters. There stands one man, picking his birds, and dreading a miss for the sake of his reputation; here is a greedy shot, firing at everything, blowing much of his game to pieces, for fear any one else should get a shot; and again, there is the keeper's horror and detestation—a man who sends off his birds wounded, as a rule hitting them, but very seldom killing one clean, with the exception of those that he utterly annihilates. Lookers-on are apt to laugh at sportsmen for missing pheasants, so large do they look, and such apparently easy shots do they give; and until a person tries himself, he has no idea how fast they really do fly, or how easy it is to miss them.

Rabbit-shooting is capital sport; indeed, none can be better for affording sport to a large Christmas-party in the country. Everybody enjoys it, and brightens up at the idea, from the schoolboy home for the holidays—who has been in and out of the house scores of times already to see how the weather looked, whether the beagles would be ready, or on some other wonderful pretext—to the old sportsman, who did not know whether he should come, but cannot resist the temptation, merely trying at first to save his dignity by saying he should just come and see if any woodcocks were sprung, and ending in being as enthusiastic about it as the youngest. The 'form' displayed

by the shooters is diverse. There is the elderly gentleman who gets away by himself to a quiet corner, and is found at lunch-time with three or four mangled rabbits, none of them having been more than a couple of yards from his gun when they were shot. Then there is the man who will always fire both barrels: if he misses with the first, of course he tries with his second; but if he does hit the first time, discharges the second barrel as a sort of salute in honour of his successful first. And here is an amateur—this one usually a schoolboy or 'Varsity man—who fires at whatever he gets the slightest glimpse of: a robin flitting about amongst the brambles is safe to have a shot fired at it; and indeed the dogs, keepers, and shooters have all, in their turns, very narrow escapes from this gentleman: the position he has held is well and distinctly marked by the cut-down underwood and well-peppered trunks of trees. Then there is the sportsman, generally a great swell, who fires at everything he sees in the distance, and claims all game killed within a radius of a quarter of a mile. He cannot be induced to shoot at a rabbit or any game within a reasonable distance, his excuse always being 'Choke-bore, my dear fellow—blow it to bits'; the fact being that he never hits anything except by accident, and fancies by this plan that he is not detected.

I once saw a capital trick played on a person of this kind by a couple of mischievous schoolboys. They procured a dead rabbit, and fixed it firmly in a lifelike position by means of sticks, &c.; then tying a long piece of string to each fore-leg, they went and ensconced themselves behind two large trees in the cover, one on each side of the road, about seventy yards

from the gentleman's stand. Putting down the rabbit, one of them drew it slowly across the road, the other giving a shout, which made their friend look round and immediately shoot at it, when the string was jerked and the rabbit fell on its side. Whilst he was reloading and fiddling with his gun, the rabbit was drawn away, and in a short time the game was played again; in the end about twenty shots were fired at it by the victim, not one of which touched it, and the string was only cut once. When lunch-time came, and the keeper went round to collect the rabbits, he was saluted by the gentleman with,

'Well, Smith, got my eye in to-day. Never saw such a gun; killed at least thirty rabbits straight off crossing the road up there. Must have been one of their regular runs.'

Off went the keeper to pick them up, and of course detected the trick at once. His good manners would not allow him to laugh there; so he had to make a bolt for it, and, to my great surprise, I saw this staid and serious head-keeper burst through the cover into the ride I was in, and begin to shout with laughter in the most uproarious manner. For a moment I thought he had gone mad, and on walking up to him could get nothing out of him, except between his fits of laughter, 'Beg pardon, sir, but them "limbs," them two "limbs!"' At last he got sufficiently calm to tell me what had occurred, and I need hardly say that I laughed almost as heartily. The indignation of the victim was great when he discovered the trick, and he stalked off to the house at once; and perhaps it was well that he did, for the two young scamps' account of the whole thing was enough to send any one into fits.

It is needless to say that they ever after occupied the foremost place in the keeper's affections.

It is, indeed, a very pretty sight to see a pack of beagles working in cover. How they try every tuft of grass or rushes! Soon you notice that they are working more eagerly, and some begin to lash their tails, and suddenly out bolts 'bunny' from his seat, sure to be saluted by a hasty shot from some one, not the least to its detriment, but a very narrow escape for the leading dogs. Away go the pack, making the woods ring with their tongues. Excited individuals race after them, often with their guns on full cock, and their fingers on the trigger. What their ideas may be in this performance is difficult to say, but I suppose it is the effect of that temporary insanity that seizes many people at the sight of a rabbit. As a rabbit invariably runs a ring, and returns to its starting-place, there is not the least use, except for the sake of the exercise, in trying to follow it; and the first one put up is safe to run his ring, as the good shots will not fire at him, that the youngsters may have a chance, and the indifferent shots are sure to miss the first through excitement. You hear plenty of shots whilst the dogs are running, as other rabbits, frightened by their noise and passage, bolt from their seats and scuttle about everywhere. Besides these, a few old cock-pheasants, who have strayed from the preserves, are sure to be found and shot. You shortly hear a shot from the cover the rabbit was found in, followed by 'Who-whoop!' showing that the hunted one has been killed.

The keeper then begins to draw afresh, and you may notice that certain of the older sportsmen are very attentive to the hounds whilst drawing, the reason being,

as is soon evident, that they hope a woodcock may be flushed, and their hopes are usually realised. If you mark one beagle poking about by himself, sniffing along, evidently on scent, yet not opening, you may be pretty sure he is on a woodcock. But very soon another rabbit is found, and away goes the pack, this time not quite so steadily, as the number of rabbits up tempt the younger hounds after them. However, this adds (except in the opinion of the staid elders) to the sport; and soon, by the noise of the beagles' tongues and the rapid shooting, it appears as if every hound had a rabbit to himself. There certainly must be some 'sweet little cherub' sitting 'up aloft,' who protects rabbit-shooters and beagles, so reckless does the shooting always appear. Here you see an excited youth fire at a rabbit not a yard in front of the dog. How he manages to miss both seems incomprehensible, but he does. There another rushes round a corner, and blazes both barrels at one, just in a line with another gun, and only a few yards from him; but he escapes too. In a word, rabbit-shooting with beagles is one of the most amusing, but at the same time one of the most dangerous, sports going.

The advance of civilisation and cultivation has almost entirely spoiled snipe and wild-fowl shooting. In the districts where, thirty years ago, ducks might be found by dozens and snipe in swarms, the former are extinct; and as for the latter, if there happens to be one, it flies off before you are within half a mile of it, as if it was ashamed of being seen in such a place. I well remember the capital shooting I used to get in Berkshire. There was a large swampy common of several hundred acres, all rough sedgy grass

and rushes; on one side was a wide ditch full of twists and turns, with high reedy banks, and at the further end a narrow tributary of the Thames, with beds of water-rushes on both sides; and on the other side were acres of small meadows of from six to ten acres, divided by high hawthorn hedges and deep wide ditches. It was a real 'happy hunting-ground' for any one fond of the sport, and many have been the long days that I and my retriever passed on it. The common itself was invariably full of snipe, and they behaved themselves properly in those days, not rising and going off in whisks directly you appeared, but trying to be shot at decently, like respectable birds. Then the ditch and river were sure to hold ducks; and after you had hunted the common, it was very exciting work, creeping up the various well-known curves and turns in the ditch, where the ducks usually remained, my dog creeping after me, quite as much interested as I was myself, and showing most wonderful intelligence in avoiding stepping on any little pieces of thin ice or anything that would make a noise; then the careful look over the bank, and if the stalk had been successful, the rapid double shot at the ducks, as they rose with a rush, followed by the drop of killed or wounded, if the shot had been fortunate, and the subsequent hunt after the cripples, if unfortunately there were any, for nothing on earth is so difficult to get as a wounded duck. The way they will dive, and the time they can keep under water, only rising and putting the tip of their beak up to get air, and the extraordinary places they get into, will puzzle the best retriever and weary out his master's patience, unless he has a very large stock of that, or obstinacy, in his

composition. But very often, when I peered cautiously over the bank, the ducks could just be seen swimming away down a further reach of the ditch, making for the larger stream below, and then it was a race as to which should get there first, as the cunning birds knew as well as I did that if they once got there, and into the reed-beds, they were comparatively safe. It was no joke, running as hard as you could go, in a stooping position, for several hundred yards; and often they would escape me, an unfortunate step on a piece of thin ice, or a stick, making them rise, and I then had the pleasure of seeing them fly off and drop into a reed-bed half a mile off, which I could not get at.

I had often been warned that the ditch was dangerous, and proved it on one occasion, very nearly to my cost. Some ducks dropped into a rushy pool in a field on the opposite side of it, and as I should have had a walk of a mile to get round to them, I determined to try and cross, fortunately for myself selecting a place where there was a stout young willow; so putting down my gun, and catching firm hold of the tree, I put one leg into the ditch, and soon found, though it passed down through the mud above my knee, that no bottom was to be found, and on trying to withdraw it, discovered that my leg was fixed as if in a vice. Fortunately the willow was strong, and having one leg on the bank, after pulling until I thought the other must be dislocated, I succeeded in extricating myself.

But the meadows on the further side were where the best sport used to be got. These, as I have said, were divided by large hawthorn hedges fully twelve feet high, and intersected by deep ditches full of reeds, with an

open pool here and there. The meadows, too, had narrow gutters cut in them, to act as drains, I believe, and these abounded with snipe; and after you had flushed the common ones, if you hunted carefully a good many jacks could be found. The ditches were very good for ducks. By help of the hedges you could get up to them unperceived, and many a fine mallard I got here. Hares were also fond of the rough grass, and partridges might usually be found in the middle of the day. I remember bagging one December day six and a half couple of ducks, eleven couple of snipe, besides some jacks, three hares, and three and a half brace of birds. This does not sound much, but to me it was a thoroughly enjoyable day. No keeper following at one's heels, full of advice, but just going where and how I pleased; then the successful stalk after ducks, and the unexpected luck with partridges and hares, in addition to the snipe, have indelibly impressed this day on my memory. Being in this neighbourhood a short time ago, I went down to look at my favourite ground, and found that the large marshy common, with a few donkeys and some wretched cows trying to get a living off it, had been drained, and subdivided by neat post and rail fences, and sheep were grazing where snipe used to abound. The only thing unchanged was the old ditch. I suppose it is all right, but I prefer the ducks and snipe.

Many years ago very fair duck-shooting, and some snipe as well, might be got on the Thames between Marlow and Windsor, and this was a very luxurious kind of wild-fowl shooting; for all you had to do was to hire a punt and a good puntsman who knew the river well, and, wrapping yourself

up comfortably in a warm coat, drop down the river, going into the quiet backwaters and round the eyot-beds. In favourable weather a good many ducks might be found, and it was curious to notice how they would hide themselves under the banks where they were undermined by the stream, and the roots of the osiers hung down. An old mallard would constantly stay until fairly poked out; and often when you thought you had tried them thoroughly, after you left an old fellow would rise and go quacking off. The eyot-beds were favourite places for snipe; but you could not do much with these unless with a steady old dog, who would poke slowly all over the place, the stumps and stalks of the osiers entirely preventing any walking. But now, I believe, this style of shooting is at an end.

My last attempt at duck-shooting was very exciting, in fact rather too much so. A friend, who knew my weakness for it, wrote and asked me to come to his house, as I could get capital flight-shooting close to his place. Of course I went, and in the evening we started for the river, which was much flooded, and embarking in a boat, I was soon landed on a small mound in the middle of the floods, about twelve feet square, and was told it was a first-rate place, as the ducks, in their flight from some large ponds about five miles off, always passed over it. I was also told I might be sure to know when they were coming by the flashes of the guns of other wild fowlers on the banks some miles away. A whistle was given me to signal for the boat when I wanted it, and I was left alone in my glory. It was very cold, and my island was too small for exercise. Soon a flash caught my eye, and then the report of a

gun fired some miles off came to my ears, soon followed by a succession of flashes and reports from gunners posted along each side of the river. The effect was very pretty, and I admired it greatly, until an idea struck me that there might be guns posted on the bank behind. Just then some ducks came along, and I fired rapidly at them; almost simultaneously came two reports from the bank, and some heavy charges of shot cut up the water all round; in addition something weighty struck the ground just in my rear, covering me with mud. Instantly blowing my whistle, the boat soon came, and on landing I saw two men, one of whom coming up asked me where I had been. I told him 'on the mound;' to which he rejoined, 'Was you, really? Lor, now, if I didn't think it was the miller's old donkey! and, thinks I, if the aggravating old beast gets there, a shot or two won't hurt un, and teach him not to get there again; so I lets 'goo' when the ducks comes along. There, and so 'twas you, sir; lor, now, to think of that!' and the old fellow went off into a series of chuckles.

His gun was an extraordinary one—a single barrel, something like four feet long, about eight bore. I asked what charge he put in, and he showed me a measure that held at least four drachms of powder, and another that would contain about three ounces of number two shot. This was how he loaded, and in addition, he said, he always put in a couple of pistol-bullets—'they did bring anything down so sweet that they hit.' So these were the pleasant things I heard strike the ground just behind me. I went home at once, thankful that I had not been bagged.

R. BIRD THOMPSON.

IN RETREAT.

A Long Vacation Experience.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE DIARY OF A PLAIN GIRL.'

Convent of St. Odile,
Odilienberg, Vosges,
July.

MY DEAR BLANCHE,

Your letter, with its reproaches, was forwarded me here from home. Poor thing! I pity you. Even Camford and our dear Princess Ida's university cannot compensate for mountain sunlight and the shadow of pine-forests. And I was never fond of Long Vacation term. And now I suppose you want to know about our reading-party of two, which excited so much scorn on your part when you heard of it.

When we got as far as Strasburg, Psyche declared that she believed you were right after all, and that Odilienberg was a mythical place. I told her to gather her rosebuds; we were to pass the night at Strasburg, and need take no thought for the morrow and St. Odile.

O, Strasburg is the most delightful place in the world! One seems to have stepped into a picture by Dürer or Holbein. I half expected to see an antic Death come hop-hopping down the narrow street, with the quaint old houses and carved chimneys, where the storks stand, looking as if they were carved themselves.

Psyche made some delightful verses about it, which she is going to send to the *Camford Review*.

Early next morning we took the train to Barr, a little picturesque Alsatian town. From Barr we hired a remarkable 'one-hoss shay,' which bore us and our

luggage, by a long winding route, to our destination. Psyche got quite excited at finding herself in the 'Blue Alsatian mountains,' hummed that everlasting tune from beginning to end, and made sentimental allusions to 'that lovely waltz with Frank!'

In revenge I quoted Browning:

'When you've passed the cornfield country,
Where vineyards leave off, flocks are
packed,
And sheep-range leads to the very base
O' the mountain, where, at a funeral
pace,
Round about, solemn and slow,
One by one, row after row,
Up and up, the pine-trees grow;
So, like black priests up, and so
Down the other side again.'

That is a very good description of the scenery we passed through. I do so love pine-trees, especially when, as here, they grow on a red soil, amid red rocks. Red sandstone of a peculiar soft shade is very abundant in the Vosges; Strasburg Cathedral is built of it, and many other buildings of less importance.

After about three hours' drive, our carriage drove through a small archway, and stopped before an unpromising gray wall, with a little door in it. There was no bell. No one came out to meet us; various stray persons of very *bourgeois* aspect hung about to watch us dismount. We felt lost and bewildered. At this point an American lady, who had come up for the day, 'guessed' we had better go in search of the Mother, but observed that she thought there was no room for us in the convent. Disinayed, we

passed through the little door, and found ourselves in a small quadrangle, of which three sides were formed by a low gray building, the fourth by a small chapel of the same melancholy gray. In one corner a door stood open, through which we passed, and found ourselves in a vaulted stone passage, whitewashed, and fraught with strange odours. A red-cheeked nun, in the black cape, gray dress, and blue apron of the order, told us, in horrible *patois*, to seek the Mother in the garden. There, indeed, we found her—a wicked-looking old woman, with a malevolent eye, which no amount of *Aves* and *Paternosters* has taught to look in any other direction than that of the main chance.

She showed us our rooms herself; they are large and airy, and command a view of a pine-clad hill on the right, and a great plain like a map below, which stretches as far as the Black Forest mountains. We live *en pension*, and pay six marks a day, which is dear for this part of the world.

Apparently, the use of the bath is unknown among the sisters of the Order of St. Odile. Psyche's travelling 'tub' was regarded with amazement, and the Mother assured us that it would be impossible to let us have water for it. We remarked that this was a point on which we must insist.

'Dann gehen Sie in den Hohwald,' said the Mother, with a wicked chuckle.

Hohwald is a sophisticated little place some miles off, where the discontented visitor to Odilienberg is verbally relegated by the Mother. However, we did not go to Hohwald, and we did get our bath-water.

We had arrived in the after-

noon, and were very hungry by seven o'clock, when the supper or *Abendessen* is served.

Feeding, like all the other arrangements, is a very promiscuous affair at the convent. Rough plenty, a greater abundance of meat than of knives, of bread than of platters, is the order of the day. It is served in a refectory, with a vaulted stone roof like the corridor, and fragrant with the same curious odours. Our fellow-guests, some twenty in number, are chiefly Alsations, of the small *bourgeoisie*, I should say. The nuns wait at table in a kindly, fussy, unsystematic fashion eminently characteristic of them. These poor souls can no more understand division of labour than they can give you a direct answer. There is generally a concentration of food at one end of the table, and absolute famine at the other. Psyche says it is the want of masculine influence which is to blame; but Psyche was always a traitor to the cause.

The food itself is extremely mysterious; 'curious meat,' as Mr. Swinburne's Clerk says in *The Leper*, would best describe it. Curious meat, and still more curious sauces; salads most curious of all. An uncanny flavour pervades everything, from the nondescript soup to the fossil fantastic cakes—heart-shaped, cross-shaped, bird-shaped—which, together with cheese, constitute desert.

Psyche came into my room at seven o'clock the next morning with a woful expression on her face. The night had been passed in vain and ceaseless warfare with animals such as Mr. Keating shows us so nicely magnified in the advertisement of his invaluable powder. I owned to a like experience, and we went gloomily enough down the red-sandstone

stairs. If the supper arrangements be 'promiscuous,' what is one to say of the breakfast?

There is no cloth on the table beyond its normal oilskin cover; but it is covered with long loaves of bread, guiltless of butter, or even plates! If you want to eat, you snatch at a loaf, hew off a slice of the consistency of wood, betake yourself to your large white bowl and soup-spoon, and wait till your coffee is brought you.

After our first breakfast we fetched our books, and established ourselves in the garden, resolutely bent on work. Psyche made elaborate arrangements with cushions on the ivy-grown gray wall, and I fortified myself with a rampart of lexicons. The garden is planted with little squares of cabbages and such-like unpoetic growths. Presently a nun came out, and began pulling up roots, with the disregard of time which is everywhere observable. She was old and pale, but had a nice cheerful face. There is a small supplementary chapel in the garden, and soon a funny little man dressed as a monk emerged from it, with a crowd of peasant 'pilgrims' at his heels. I looked at the procession, then at Psyche: her eyes were straying from Quain's *Anatomy*; but she cast them down hastily when I turned my head.

The convent-door opened, and another nun came into the garden. She had a fat red face, on which rested a lurking simper; there was a great loaf under one arm, a wine-bottle under the other. As she passed the brother, she cast him an ineffable glance from under her demure eyelids. Psyche shut up her book with a bang.

'Throw *Anatomy* to the dogs; I'll none of it!' she cried desperately.

I cast down my lexicon.

'Who cares for ancient Greece? We are in the Middle Ages!' I said, springing to my feet. After that we gave ourselves up to the spirit of the hour, and thoroughly explored the convent. There is a great kitchen, presided over by a tall Sister, a wilderness of provisions and pots and pans; but much of the food-preparation is carried on at deal tables in the corridor, where the pounding of roots, scraping of herbs, and washing of plates seems never to cease. There is an infinity of cooks spoiling any quantity of broth. A door at the end of the corridor leads into a little dim stone passage looking down on a small inner chapel, and containing a ghastly effigy of St. Odile enclosed in a glass sarcophagus.

Beyond this is the library, a picturesque stone-vaulted room, with stained-glass windows and a quantity of books. Some of these are old and valuable. A vellum-bound *Livy* looked rather tempting, and I was surprised to find a *Théâtre de Voltaire* hobnobbing with the holy fathers.

There are all sorts of unexplored passages, where clothes are hung to dry, linen is stored, &c., and whence rats occasionally emerge at night. Dinner, which is barbarously served at 12.30, was a more abundant edition of last night's supper.

The old Mother hovered about us during the meal, poking her witch's face into that of some unfortunate guest. Fortunately for us, she has a decided preference for the men, who do not seem grateful for her attentions. Psyche says she is a great flirt; but I should be sorry to indorse such an opinion.

She is a very well-known character in the neighbourhood, but hardly a popular one. The people

say she is unkind to the poor, and tyrannical with the nuns, and she has a great reputation for 'canniness.' To do her justice, she is wonderfully keen and active for her age; but she is an undoubted despot, with all the faults of her qualities.

Psyche was anxious to account for the presence of the little monk in the garden, which she considers highly improper. It seems that there is a small band of brothers living in the convent, who perform the service in the chapel and help in the garden. They are bound by no vows, are merely ordinary peasants 'in retreat.' In the morning they wear blouses for their work; later in the day they appear as full-blown monks. Did you ever hear of such laxity in a convent? I believe St. Odile is regarded with great disfavour by the bishop, who naturally enough objects to the mixture of soul-saving and hotel-keeping, an arrangement which has gone on for the last thirty years. There are rumours that the place is to pass into the

hands of an hotel-proprietor; so I suppose the days of this most unique establishment are numbered. I am glad to have seen it and to have lived here; it is an interesting experience, and in many ways a pleasant one. The air is very good. There are some beautiful walks in the neighbourhood—old ruins to dream in, old towns to explore, endless pine-forests to wander in. Psyche and I feel quite set up by our fortnight's stay. And though the prices seem rather high at starting, we have decided that the place is cheap. If not generous, the old Mother is just, and our bills are quite clear from the usual list of 'extras.' To-morrow we start for the Black Forest. Cyril and Florian are to meet us at Freyburg, which will be delightful; Cyril is Psyche's brother, as you know. Psyche sends her love, and so does your idle

MELISSA.

P.S. If you want to know more about St. Odile, read Katherine Lee's book, *In the Alsatian Mountains*.

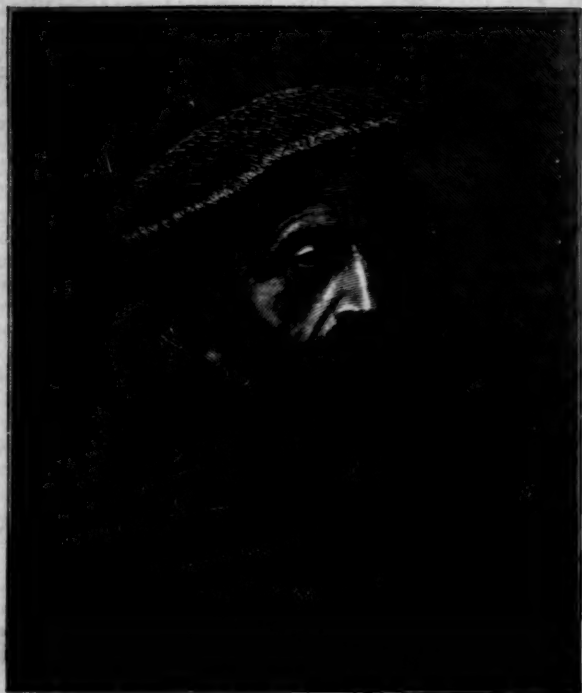
J. C. HOOK, R.A.

(With a Portrait.)

AMONGST the group of youngsters who were probationers in the Antique School of the Royal Academy, in 1836, was James Clarke Hook, then in his seventeenth year. He came, as so many good and true art-students have come, from studying the marbles in the British Museum, where he had been noticed as a close hard worker, possessed by an ardent spirit of honesty and earnestness. In those days such qualities were less common than they have happily since become. Students were then too apt either to regard themselves as heaven-born geniuses, with souls above the vital necessity of drudgery, or to start in the race with less of that excellent stimulant, encouragement, in the way of either praise or profit, than they now receive. Hook's father, a judge in the Mixed Court of Sierra Leone, had assented to his desire to be an artist directly after he left the North Islington Proprietary School; and his mother, a daughter of the famous Bible commentator, Dr. Adam Clarke, was pleased and proud to watch his progress. Wilkie was then alive, and in the year of Hook's being admitted as student had exhibited his 'Peep o' Day Boy's Cabin,' the homely truthfulness and feeling of which moved general admiration, and may well have had much to do in founding the boy's real taste; for Hook is essentially a people's painter, and his fame dates from the year in which he diverged from historical grandeur and works of a more purely imaginative character into those transcripts from

real humble life which have been his greater triumphs, as they then were Wilkie's. It was, moreover, that period when Turner, having abandoned what Ruskin called a school of landscape in which 'brown was thought the proper colour for trees, gray for shadows, and fog-yellow for high lights,' was advancing towards the grand truths of atmosphere and sunshine in works which must have awakened in many minds perceptions and ideas of landscape-painting altogether new and fresh. Through their influence, young Hook may have developed and strengthened his own abounding love of light and air; for it is thus 'while on the anvil glows the steel' that the deepest and most lasting impressions are consciously or unconsciously made, to start forth at once, or prevail at last, after being latent and unproductive for years.

Hook won his first medal, as a student of the Life School, in 1842, three years after he had first exhibited in the Royal Academy, and achieved the greater glory of studentship when Mr. George Jones (Sir Martin Archer Shee, the President, being ill) presented to him on the 10th of December 1846 the 'gold medal, with the *Discourses of the Presidents Reynolds and West for the best historical composition in oil of "The Finding of the Body of Harold."*' A tempest of hearty student-cheers saluted him as he advanced to receive the well-won honour, and the very few critics who then publicly noticed art-events spoke of him in glowing



J. C. HOOK, R.A.

See the Sketch.

terms as a painter of the highest ability. In the following year he justified his position still more emphatically by carrying off 'the travelling studentship' with his fine painting, entitled, 'Rizpah watching the Bodies of the Sons of Saul.'

In Italy he remained but half the allotted period, sacrificing the second half of the two years' income the Academy allowed by returning home to his newly-made wife, the third daughter of Mr. J. Burton, a solicitor, and bringing with him rather a valuable collection of sketches and studies than many copies of old Venetian masters, to whom he had, however, evidently given careful and profitable study, especially in the matter of colour. Mr. Hook then began to exhibit his series of pictures, Italian in subject and treatment, beginning with 'Bassanio commenting on the Casket' (1847). In 1850 he was made an Academy Associate; and in 1854 began that divergence which exhibited his real strength, and soon carried him to those 'fresh woods and pastures new' wherein he still luxuriates. That year he exhibited 'Rest by the Wayside,' and thereby returned to his earlier aspirations, substituting for paid models, costumed to personate ideal personages with backgrounds all more or less imaginary, the scenes and characters of actual life engaged in their ordinary occupations. His studio now became the fresh, free, open air, and 'The Shepherd's Boy,' with 'The Market Morning' of 1855, proved at once how wholesome and instructive was its influence. In 1856 appeared 'Brambles in the Way,' 'The Fisherman's Good Night,' and 'The Passing Cloud,' all of which received laudatory critical attention. In 1857 ap-

peared his 'Signal on the Horizon' and 'The Shipboy's Letter.' Mr. Ruskin said of the former, 'This is the sweetest and most pathetic picture of an English boy that has been painted in modern times,' adding, 'As for the thought and choice of scene, and rendering of expression throughout the picture, they are all so true, so touching, and so lovely, that I do not choose to speak many words about them, lest I should do the reader harm instead of good by some discordant expression. It would need a little finished idyl of Tennyson to express them rightly. But when you have made out all this design at your leisure, go at once to "The Shipboy's Letter," for the whole heart of rural England is in that, as of sailor England in the other. Take care to read the direction of the envelope on the ground, with the Dover postmark: "William Dibble, . . . Ongar Hatch, Surrey;" and what is legible of the beginning of the letter, "My dear Father and Mother . . . Thank God . . . dear sister."'

Space will not permit the enumeration in their successive order of all this great painter's works. His 'Widow's Son going to Sea,' the 'Coast Boy gathering Eggs,' the 'Pastoral' of 1858, which Mr. Ruskin praised as 'exquisite in idea and some qualities of colour,' and the 'Luff Boy' of 1859, of which the *Art Journal* critic said he had 'never seen the sea so green,' and of which Mr. Ruskin wrote enthusiastically, 'A glorious picture, most glorious,' adding, 'Infinite thanks, Mr. Hook, for this; for our "Brook of Human Life" also, and "Our Hours of Listless Sway on Gentle Wave." All of them beautiful.' He thought the distant landscape in the brook scene 'one of the sweetest ever found by painter—

for found it evidently is, not composed.'

And this brings us to the fact that Mr. Hook passes most of his time where only these things are found, with Nature in the open air. He is a farmer as well as a painter, and delights as greatly in being on the tossing waves as he does in painting them. Those who last year saw Millais's portrait of his sun-browned, weather-beaten face, and old brown coat, will more easily recognise this. Nature is to him everything, his co-mate in work, his playmate, his teacher, and dearest friend. As botanist, geologist, fisherman, boatman, ploughman, woodman, reaper, tourist, artist, he is always with her, and knows her in all her many moods with a knowledge singularly complete and comprehensive. He studies his humble neighbours in their homes and rural workshops, in the fields and on the sea, recording their joys, labours, and woes with touches full of sympathetic feeling and perceptions sharpened by constant habits of observation.

Mr. Hook received the full

honour of R.A. in 1860, in which year was shown his picture, 'Herring Fishing,' and that having for its title the lines :

'O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay,'

which was described by some of the ablest critics as one of the most perfect works that had ever come from his easel. Walter Thornbury wrote of this, 'That one touch of the fluid, lucid, emerald water that laps the boat is worth a dozen cold Vander-veldes.' But why enumerate the long, long list of his admirable and masterly pictures? who does not sniff the salty breeze or the sweet country air as he recalls them? 'Lobster Catchers' and 'Crabbers,' 'Mackerel Take' and 'Mother Carey's Chickens,' the 'Morning after a Gale,' 'A Cow-herd's Mischief,' and 'Cottagers making Cider,' 'From Under the Sea,' 'The Skipper Ashore,' 'The River,' 'Jolly as a Sand-boy,' and many another thing of beauty painted by Hook come fresh to the memory—pictures which, if for so long paint and canvas may endure, will be 'a joy for ever.'

A. H. W.

THE HORSE AND HIS RIDER.

An Anecdotic History.

By 'THORMANNY,' AUTHOR OF 'FAMOUS RACING MEN,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARAB AND HIS STEED.

THE Arab is in many respects entitled to take the lead among all the breeds of horses. The pace of these animals is rapid and graceful; they are hardy, and can continue travelling at the rate of from fifty to sixty miles a day; and five or six pounds weight of coarse barley in the evening is a sufficient feed. The horses of Arabia are divided into two classes, ignoble and noble: the former they call by a name which signifies 'without pedigree;' the latter by another name, which means 'known for two thousand years.' 'If,' says an Arab story, 'you meet one of the faithful in the desert mounted upon a *kochlani*, and he shall say, "God bless you!" before you can say, "And God's blessing upon you," he shall be out of your horizon, for the whirlwind toils after him in vain.'

The best horses are understood to be bred by the Bedouins of the north part of Arabia, and the genealogy is invariably reckoned from the mother. Those of the pure blood are more readily and cheaply obtained from the people about the towns than from the nomads of the desert, for the latter have a strong affection for their horses, and will hardly part with them at any price. It sometimes happens, however, that there is an 'unlucky mark' on the horse, as the superstitious Arab

imagines, and then a really good thoroughbred Arabian steed can be obtained for a very small sum.

But the European who purchases horses of the Arabs will require all his wits, for the simple sons of the desert, although very romantic, are reputed to be most accomplished cheats. They beat even Yorkshiremen at horse-dealing.

Learned Mussulmans have written a great number of books upon horses, in which they discourse at considerable length upon their colours, upon all that is esteemed beneficial or injurious, their maladies, and the right mode of treatment. One of them, Abou-Obeida, a contemporary of the son of Haroun-al-Raschid, composed no fewer than fifty volumes on the horse. This Abou-Obeida met with a little misadventure, which shows that it is not the author of the most ponderous and numerous volumes who imparts the soundest information, and that not the worst plan is to consult men themselves.

'How many books hast thou written upon the horse?' asked one day of a celebrated Arab poet, the vizir of Mamoun, the son of Haroun-al-Raschid. 'Only one.' Then turning to Abou-Obeida, he put to him the same question. 'Fifty,' replied he. 'Rise, then,' said the vizir. 'Go up to that horse, and repeat the name of every part of his frame, taking care to point out the posi-

tion of each.' 'I am not a veterinary surgeon,' answered Abou-Obeïda. 'And thou?' said the vizir to the poet.

'Upon that—it is the poet himself who relates the anecdote—I rose from my seat, and taking the animal by the forelock, I began to name one part after another, placing my hand upon each to indicate its position; and at the same time recited all the poetic allusions, all the sayings and proverbs referring to it. When I had finished, the vizir said to me, "Take the horse." I took it; and if ever I wished to annoy Abou-Obeïda, I rode the animal on my way to visit him.'

General Daumas, from whom we have just quoted, was a distinguished officer of the French army, who served sixteen years in Algeria. For two years he was consul at Mascara, accredited to the Emir Abd-el-Kader, and afterwards for a considerable time Central Director of the Arab Office of Algeria—posts which brought him in close contact with the native chiefs. He gives the following further interesting particulars of the Arab horses:

'The Arabs of Sahara are very particular as to the colour of their horses. White is the colour for princes, but does not stand heat. The black brings good fortune, but fears rocky ground. The chestnut is the most active. If one tells you that he has seen a horse fly in the air, ask of what colour it was; if he replies, "Chestnut," believe him.' 'In a combat against a chestnut you must have a chestnut.' The bay is the hardiest and most sober. 'If one tells you a horse has leaped to the bottom of a precipice without hurting himself, ask

of what colour he was, and if he replies "Bay," believe him.'

Ben Dyab, a renowned chief of the desert, happening one day to be pursued by Saad-el-Zenaty, turned to his son and asked, 'What horses are in the front of the enemy?' 'White horses,' replied the son. 'It is well; let us make for the sunny side, and they will melt away like butter.' Some time afterwards, Ben Dyab again turned to his son and said, 'What horses are in front of the enemy?' 'Black horses,' cried his son. 'It is well; let us make for stony ground, and we shall have nothing to fear; they are the negroes of the Soudan, who cannot walk with bare feet upon the flints.' He changed his course, and the black horses were speedily distanced. A third time Ben Dyab asked, 'And now what horses are in the front of the enemy?' 'Dark chestnuts and dark bays.' 'In that case,' said Ben Dyab, 'strike out, my children, strike out, and give your horses the heel; for these might perchance overtake us had we not given barley to ours all the summer through.'

The dark dappled gray is also highly esteemed, especially when the head is of a lighter colour than the body.

The coat most despised is the piebald: 'Flee him like the pestilence, for he is own brother to the cow.'

The roan is called *meghedeur-el-deum*, 'a pool of blood.' The rider is sure to be overtaken, but will never overtake.*

The Arab horse-dealer therefore sells his horses which happen to be of the unlucky colours to the infidels, i.e. Europeans, who are not quite so superstitious; and the consequence is that many a good Arab horse, bought in Algeria

* *The Horses of the Sahara*, by General Daumas, translated by James Hutton.

* Daumas, *The Horses of the Sahara*.

or Egypt for a mere trifle, finds its way to England, France, or India.

The training the Arab horse has to endure is not only very severe, but it embraces a more varied system of exercise than falls to the lot of the English horse. The Arabs not only train their horses to endure fatigue, hunger, and thirst, and the manœuvres so necessary in battle, but they also teach them to shine at feasts by the following accomplishments :

El Entrabe, 'the caracol.' The horse walks, so to speak, on his hind legs. Scarcely does he touch the ground with his fore-feet than he rises again. One hand, in concert with the legs, soon trains to this exercise a horse of fair intelligence.

El Gueteâa, 'the bucking.' The horse springs up with all fours off the ground, the horseman at the same time throwing up his gun into the air and cleverly catching it. To obtain this action, the rider marks certain intervals of rest, and works with his leg. He gives with the animal as it rises, in order to hold him up when he comes down again. Nothing can be more picturesque than this movement. The horses quit the earth, the guns fly into the air, and the ample folds of the burnous float and unroll themselves in the wind, thrown back by the vigorous arms of the children of the desert.

Lastly, *El Berraka*, 'the kneeling.' The rider, remaining on his saddle, causes his horse to kneel down. This is the *ne plus ultra* of the horse and the animal. Not every horse is fit for this exercise. The colt is trained to it by tickling him on the coronet, pinching him on the legs, and forcing him to bend the knee. After a time the horseman will reap the benefit of these preliminary steps. He need only clear his feet of the stirrups,

stretch his legs forward, turn out the points of his toes, touch with his long spurs the animal's forearm, and then, as his piece is fired at marriage-feasts and other rejoicings, his horse will kneel down, amid the applause of the young maidens, piercing the air with joyful acclamations.*

Nevertheless, endurance is the quality most cultivated in the Arab horse. It is necessary that the horse should be able to travel long distances upon scanty food and little water, for in the African deserts the places where man and horse can refresh are few and far between ; wells are many miles apart, and even when the traveller has found water for himself and steed, the chances are that no food can be had, except what the horse and his rider have brought with them from their last halting-place.

'Every horse inured to fatigue brings good fortune,' the Arabs say. So to speak, he is always on the march. He travels with his master, who is one of the greatest travellers on horseback in the world. He travels to seek his food ; he traverses long distances in search of water, and this sort of life renders him abstinent and not easily tired. Sidi-Hamed-Ben-Mohammed-el-Mokhrani, the chief of one of the most illustrious families of all Algeria, says :

'During my long career, in my tribes, by my friends, or among my followers, I have seen upwards of ten thousand colts reared, and I affirm that all those whose education was not begun at a very early age have never turned out other than stubborn troublesome horses, unfit for war. I also affirm that when I have made long and rapid marches, at the head of twelve or fifteen hundred horsemen, horses, however lean, if

* Daumas, *The Horses of the Sahara*.

early broken in to fatigue, never fell out of the ranks, whilst those that were fat, or mounted too late, have always fallen to the rear. My conviction on this head is based on such a long experience, that lately, finding myself at Masseur (Cairo) in the necessity of purchasing some horses, I refused point-blank all that were presented to me that had been broken in at a comparatively advanced age.

"How has thy horse been reared?" was always my first question.

"My lord," an inhabitant of the city would reply, "this gray stone of the river has been brought up by me like one of my own children, always well fed, well tended to, and spared as much as possible, for I did not begin to ride him till he was full four years old. See how fat he is, how sound in all his limbs."

"Well, keep him, my friend; he is thy pride and that of thy family. It would be a shame to my gray beard to deprive thee of him."

"And thou," I would then ask of an Arab, whom I recognised as a child of the desert, so embrowned was he by the sun—"how has thy horse been reared?"

"My lord," he would answer, "betimes I formed his back to the saddle and his mouth to the bridle. With him I have reached a distant, very distant, point. He has passed many a day without food. His ribs are bare, it is true; but if you encounter any enemies on your path he will not leave you in peril. I swear it by the day of last judgment, when Allah shall be kadi, and the angels witnesses."

"Hola, there! tether the dark chestnut before my tent," I would cry to my servants, "and satisfy this man."^{*}

^{*} Daumas, *The Horses of the Sahara*.

But although the Arab horse is worked hard, it is most tenderly treated, as a rule—petted as the collier in England pets his dog—at the expense of the rest of the family.

"The love the Arabs bear their mares is exemplified by an anecdote which was told me," says the 'Old Shekarry,' "by a celebrated Arab chieftain who served on my staff in the Crimen, Mahomet Ben Abdullah, better known as Bou Maza (the son of the Goat), whose daring exploits and hairbreadth escapes in his predatory expeditions against the French have caused his name to become famous in song among the Santons of the desert. One of the tribes of the Djedjura mountains possessed a coal-black mare of the pure Nedjed breed, which in the desert was of untold value; for her fame had gone forth far and wide, and the tribes were wont to swear by her fleetness and endurance. Bou Maza, then a young man, determined to possess her either by fair or foul means, and offered the whole of his wealth in exchange, viz. several tents and slaves, forty camels, and even his two wives; but nothing would induce Ben Ali the Sheikh (who was the principal owner) to part with her. Bou Maza, who was on friendly terms with the Djedjura tribes, then determined to obtain her by stealth; but this was a difficult operation, as there were always people watching night and day. After many days' consideration, and severe praying to Allah to sharpen his wits, he fixed upon a plan, and forthwith proceeded to execute it. He cut himself with a knife about the face and chest, and wounded his horse; and one day about noon claimed the protection of Ben Ali the Sheikh, stating that he had been attacked by some Arabs of a neighbouring

tribe, with whom there was a bloody feud, who were lurking about in the vicinity. The Sheikh sent out his young men to retaliate and follow up the supposed aggressors, whilst he and the hakeem of the tribe bound up the wounds and attended on Bou Maza, who, pretending to be in a dying state, begged that they would carry him out to a sward where the cattle of the tribe were grazing, so that he might turn his face towards the sacred city, and perform his devotions. His wish was complied with, and he soon had the gratification of beholding this famous mare cropping the stunted herbage a short distance from the clump of date-trees under the shade of which he was lying. She was strictly watched by two of the tribe, who for two hours hardly ever seemed to take their eyes off her; and Bou Maza began to think that the young men would return before his undertaking could be accomplished. He therefore uttered a loud cry, as if in agony, which brought the watchers to his side, and, selecting his opportunity, he plunged a knife, which he had concealed under his dress, into their breasts, killing them ere they could utter a cry; and, flinging his burnous (cloak) over their bodies, unfasted the tether which hobbled the mare's fore-feet, and, springing on her back, was far away in the desert before the theft was discovered. When it was found out, the Sheikh Ben Ali, whose son was one of the slain, and all the men of the tribe, set out in pursuit, and, after a chase of three days, almost surprised him near one of those immense salt-marshes which are so numerous in Algeria, in a place where there was no way of escape but across this dangerous ground; and Bou Maza was about to attempt it,

when the Sheikh Ben Ali, seeing the ignominious fate that awaited his beloved mare, forgot his revenge for the loss of his son, and begged him to forbear, giving him his sacred pledge that his tribe should not molest him, or continue the pursuit for three days, should he do so, preferring to run the chance of regaining her another time to seeing her perish before his eyes. Bou Maza accepted the pledge, and got away. Another time he was hard run by the same tribe, and the Sheikh, who headed the pursuing party, being mounted upon the own brother of the mare, finding he was not gaining ground, desisted from the chase, and cried out for him to stop and not fatigue the mare to save his wretched life, and bidding him drink the water in which her feet were washed, in token of his being indebted to her for his preservation. The abduction of this celebrated mare gave rise to a feud between the tribes, in which several hundred Arabs lost their lives; and she participated in most of Bou Maza's daring exploits which made his name so terrible to those tribes who had submitted to the French.*

This story shows that the lawful owner of the mare would rather the thief should get away with her in safety than that she should be injured by overwork. This is not an uncommon kind of occurrence.

CHAPTER II.

FEATS OF ENDURANCE.

THE renowned Algerian chieftain Abd-el-Kader declared that if the true Arab horse ever treads upon ploughed land, he diminishes in value, and he illustrated the idea by the following story:

* *The Forest and the Field*, by the 'Old Shekarry.'

'A man was riding upon a horse of pure blood, when he was met by his enemy, also splendidly mounted. One pursued the other, and he who gave chase was distanced by him who fled. Despairing of reaching him, the pursuer in anger shouted out,

"I ask, in the name of God, has your horse ever worked on land?"

"He has worked on land for four days."

"Very well—mine never has; and, by the beard of the Prophet, I am sure to catch you."

'Towards the close of the day the horse that never laboured was the victor; and as the rider of the degraded horse sank under the blows of his enemy, he said,

"There has been no blessing upon our country since we changed our coursers into beasts of burden and of tillage. Has not God made the ox for the plough, the camel to transport merchandise, and the horse alone for the race? There is nothing gained by changing the ways of God" (T. B. Thorpe).

And if the Arab horses are capable of doing the amount of work stated in the following tale (which comes from one of the French generals in Algeria), they ought to be highly prized:

'With regard to the great distances accomplished by the horses of the desert of Sahara, instances may be quoted which will appear incredible, and the heroes of which are still alive (1863), if witnesses were wanted to confirm the truth of the story. Here is one of a thousand, which was told to me by a man of the tribe of Arbâa. I give his own words:

"I had come into the Tell (a most fertile district—the granary, in fact, of the Sahara) with my father and the people of my tribe to buy corn. It was in the time of the Pasha Ali. The Arbâa

had had some terrible quarrels with the Turks; and as it was their interest for the moment to feign a complete submission in order to obtain an amnesty for the past, they agreed to win over by presents of money the Pasha's suite, and to send to himself not merely a common animal as was customary, but a courser of the highest distinction. It was a misfortune, but it was the will of Allah, and we were forced to resign ourselves. The choice fell upon a mare, 'Gray Stone of the River,' known throughout the Sahara, and the property of my father. He was informed that he must hold himself in readiness to set out with her on the morrow for Algiers. After the evening prayer my father, who had taken care not to make any remark, came to me and said, 'Ben-Zyan, art thou thyself to-day? Wilt thou leave thy father in a strait, or wilt thou make his face red?'

"I am nothing but your will, my lord," I replied. 'Speak, and if I obey not your commands, it will be because I am vanquished by death.'

"Listen. These children of sin seek to take my mare in the hope of settling their affairs with the Sultan,—my gray mare, I say, which has always brought good fortune to my tent, to my children, and the camels; my gray mare, that was foaled on the day that thy youngest brother was born! Speak! Wilt thou let them do this dishonour to my hoary beard? The joy and happiness of the family are in thy hands. Mordjana (such was the name of the mare) has eaten her barley. If thou art of a truth my son, go and sup, take thy weapons, and then at earliest nightfall flee far away into the desert with the treasure dear to us all.'

"Without answering a word I kissed my father's hand, took my evening repast, and quitted Berouaguia, happy in being able to prove my filial affection, and laughing in my sleeve at the disappointment that awaited our sheikhs on their awaking. I pushed forward for a long time, fearing to be pursued, but Mordjana continued to pull at her bridle, and I had more trouble to quiet her than to urge her on. When two-thirds of the night had passed, and a desire to sleep was growing upon me, I dismounted, and seizing the reins, twisted them round my wrist. I placed my gun under my head, and at last fell asleep, softly couched on one of those dwarf palms so common in our country. An hour after, I roused myself. All the leaves of the dwarf palm had been stripped off by Mordjana. We started afresh. The peep of day found us at Souagui. My mare had thrice broken out into a sweat, and thrice dried herself. I touched her with the heel. She watered at Sidi-Bou-Zid, and that evening I offered up the evening prayer at Leghrouât, after giving her a handful of straw to induce her to wait patiently for the enormous bag of barley that was coming to her. These are not journeys fit for your horses," said Ben-Zyan in conclusion, "for the horses of you Christians, who go from Algiers to Blidah — thirteen leagues—as far as from my nose to my ear, and then fancy you have done a good day's work."

'This Arab had done *eighty leagues* in twenty-four hours (Berouaguia to Souagui, thirty-one leagues; Sidi-Bou-Zid twenty-five leagues farther on; and lastly, Leghrouât, twenty-four leagues beyond that); his mare had eaten nothing but the leaves of the dwarf palm on which he had lain

down, and only once had been watered, about the middle of the journey; and yet he swore to me by the head of the Prophet that he could have slept on the following night at Gardaya, forty-five leagues farther on, had his life been in any danger.

'Another Arab, Mohammed-Ben-Mokhtar by name, had come to buy corn in the Tell after the harvest. His tents were already pitched, and he had opened a business communication with the Arabs of the Tell, when the Bey Bou-Mezrag, "father of the spear," fell upon him at the head of a strong body of cavalry to chastise one of those imaginary offences which the Turks were in the habit of inventing as pretexts for their rapacity. Not the slightest warning had been given; the razzia was complete; and the horsemen of Makhzen gave themselves up to all the atrocities customary in such cases. Mohammed-Ben-Mokhtar thereupon threw himself on his dark bay mare, a magnificent animal known and coveted throughout the Sahara, and perceiving the critical nature of the situation, at once resolved to sacrifice the whole of his property to save the lives of his three children. One of them, only four years old, he placed on the saddle before him, and another, aged six or seven, behind him, holding on by the trousses, and was about to place the youngest in the hood of his burnous when his wife stopped him, exclaiming, "No, no; I will not let thee have this one. They will never dare to slay an infant at its mother's breast. Away! I shall keep him with me. Allah will protect us." Mohammed-Ben-Mokhtar then dashed forward, fired off his piece, and got clear of the *mêlée*; but being hotly pursued, he travelled all that day and the following

night until he reached Leghrouât, where he could rely upon being in safety. Shortly after he received intelligence that his wife had been rescued by some friends he had in the Tell. Mohammed-Ben-Mokhtar was still alive, and the two children he carried are spoken of as two of the best horse-men of the tribe.

'And why should I look for evidence to establish these facts? All the old officers of the Oran division can state how, in 1837, a general, attaching the greatest importance to the receipt of intelligence from Tlemcen, gave his own charger to an Arab to go and procure the news. The latter set out from Château Neuf at four o'clock in the morning, and returned the same hour on the following day, having travelled seventy leagues over ground very different from the comparatively level desert.*

Abd-el-Kader, when questioned about the endurance of Arab horses, replied as follows to General Daumas :

'You ask me how many days an Arab horse can march without rest, and without suffering too severely. Know, then, that a horse, sound in every limb, that eats as much barley as her stomach can contain, can do whatever his rider can ask of him. For this reason, the Arabs say, "Give barley, and overwork him." But without tasking him overmuch, a horse can be made to do sixteen parasangs day after day.† A horse performing this journey every day, and having as much barley as it likes to eat, can go on without fatigue for three or four months without lying by a single day.

* Daumas, *The Horses of the Sahara*.

† A parasang is about 5000 metres; sixteen parasangs are equal, in round numbers, to about fifty English miles.

'You ask me what distance a horse can accomplish in a day. I cannot tell you very precisely; but it ought to be about fifty parasangs, or the distance from Tlemcen to Mascara. But an animal that has performed such a journey ought to be carefully ridden on the following day, and allowed to do only a very much shorter distance.*'

CHAPTER III.

ENGLISH VERSUS ARAB THOROUGH-BREDS.

THE thoroughbred racer, as we know him in England, is a different kind of animal from the Arab thoroughbred, although a considerable amount of Arab blood runs in his veins. We have no sandy desert to try the endurance of our horses. In no part of England could a horse travel at the mildest trot for a couple of hours without coming to a drinking-place; food in the shape of grass is found by every roadside; so that it would be difficult for the horse to die of hunger or thirst if set at liberty.

The question whether the English thoroughbred, reared in our temperate climate, and brought up, so to speak, in luxury, could hold his own with the genuine horse of the desert, has been much discussed, and more than one trial has taken place; but the question even now is not to be considered as settled. Ever since it was proposed to make Egypt a halting-place on the road to India, a sporting spirit has been fostered in the land of the Pharaohs, and Egyptian princes and pashas have been found willing to run their horses and stake their money against anything the English could put in the field.

* Daumas, *The Horses of the Sahara*.

One of the first intimations Englishmen had of the fact that the Egyptians were inclined for sport was the appearance of the following letter in *Bell's Life*, in October 1849 :

'Sir,—A challenge has been sent through me, on the part of the Pasha of Egypt, to the English Turf, which I first communicated to the Jockey Club, and now wish to notify to the public through the medium of your paper. It was my intention to have sent you the letter of our Consul-General, in which this challenge is conveyed; but I have unfortunately mislaid it, and, after the most diligent search, have been unable to find it. I remember, however, the contents of it with sufficient accuracy to answer every purpose. Mr. Murray states that his Highness the Pasha is convinced that his Arab horses are superior to our English racehorses over a length of ground, and he proposes to test their relative merits by a match to be run in Egypt, the distance to be ten miles, the stake 10,000*l.*, which he thinks might be increased to 15,000*l.*, no limitation as to age or weight. The ground over which the match would be run is sand with a good many stones in it. He concludes by saying that if there is a disposition here to make the match, he will proceed to adjust the preliminaries. Upon the receipt of this letter, I wrote him word that I would make this challenge public, and I thought it very probable it would be accepted, and I then put to him a great variety of questions upon certain points on which I deemed it essential that information should be supplied. Thus the matter stands at present.—C. GREVILLE.

'Bruton Street, Oct. 12.'

Beneath the letter, *Bell's Life* had the following paragraph :

'The vast superiority of the English thoroughbred horse over Arabs has been established by innumerable trials in India; and that the Cossack horses have as little chance with them will be gathered from the following account of a match in Russia, taken from the second volume of the *Stud Book*: "Sharper, bred by Lord Egremont, and got by Octavius out of Young Amazon by Gohanna, was sent in 1825 to Russia, where he and Minna, bred by Mr. Newton, and got by Woful out of Diana by Stamford, were matched to run seventy-five versta (49½ English miles) on the public road against two Cossack horses. Minna, falling lame, was pulled up early in the race, which Sharper won with ease, notwithstanding the loss of a stirrup, and the consequent inability of the rider to restrain him for several miles. The Cossack horses had nearly three stone advantage in weight, and one of them fell at the end of twenty-five miles and died. This race was run in 1825, near St. Petersburg."

This challenge was not accepted by the English horse-owners, as appears from the following letter which appeared in *Bell's Life* of August 24th, 1851 :

'About eighteen months ago, Abbas Pasha, the Governor of Egypt, challenged the Jockey Club to run their English horses against his Arabs for a distance of not less than eight to ten miles over very fair ground for a sum of 5000*l.* to 50,000*l.*, money down, weight optional to either party, allowing also a start of three hundred yards to the English horses. This challenge was not accepted by the Jockey Club, nor did they offer it to any other gentlemen, conse-

quently the Viceroy thought they were afraid to meet him. As many of your readers, however, must be interested in knowing what an English thoroughbred horse can do amongst the Arabs, I send you an extract of a letter from Damascus, the writer of which is a Hungarian officer attached to the staff of General Guyon, now holding a command in that country:

"General Guyon's English mare is thoroughbred by Hindostan out of Lightfoot. Prince Lichtenstein brought her from England with the mother in 1848, and she is now only three and a half years old. You ask me if she ever ran against any first-rate Arab horses. I have before told you that we are very often making excursions into the Howran, to the Dead Sea, and to Horu; and in all these excursions we pass the greater part of our time with the Bedouins, owners of the finest horses, and we are scarcely together half an hour with these gentlemen without getting up a race, and as they know our general wants to purchase, they always bring every horse likely to catch his attention. Now, I assure you that on all these occasions the mare beats them all, and in splendid style, although she has never been trained for racing; and that she can also beat them at long distances she has shown very often in hunting the gazelles, running three or four miles at a stretch until we caught them, being always a long way ahead of the Arabs. The Bedouins insist upon her being an Arab mare, though they are rather puzzled at her size, as she stands 16 hands 1 inch. From what I have seen of her performance, I think a well-trained English horse would beat any Arab whatever, and in any way. Guyon's mare, when she was only one year and a half old, went through the Hun-

garian campaign in 1849, so she is pretty well seasoned."

'From the above, Mr. Editor, you will see how very soft owners of English horses were when they refused the splendid challenge of Abbas Pasha, &c.—A SUBSCRIBER.

'Cairo, Aug. 6, 1851.'

The next attempt to get up a race between English and Arab horses is thus noticed in *Bell's Life* of March 20th, 1853:

'About two years ago there was a great talk about a challenge given by Abbas Pasha to the Jockey Club to run his Arab against anything they could bring out from England, and for any amount; and a great difference of opinion existed among sporting men as to the probable result of a long race over uneven ground. The Jockey Club refused to run, and the match has remained an uncertainty ever since. Lately, however, a trial was made by an English half-bred mare, by Touchstone, against two of the best Arabs in this place, their own terms being granted, say, three miles on a straight unequal road, equal weight—ten stone upwards; and I am happy to tell you that the mare had it all her own way, winning in a canter, without having been pressed at all. The first half-mile was up a stiff hill, then down a gully—quarter of a mile—with a mile of level bad road, many parts under water, and the wind up, heavy sand and rising ground; distance, exactly three miles, and run in 7 min. 40 sec. The fact of this mare never having been intended to run a race in England will show what chance an Arab would have had with a thoroughbred or a steeplechaser. But, to put the question at rest, Mr. Smart, the spirited owner of the mare, has accepted another race with an

Arab belonging to his Highness Said Pasha; and, as this horse has beat everything he has run against, the result, if favourable, will put him in a position to challenge all comers at Cairo for the long race of seven to ten miles, when no doubt he will take the conceit out of them. The race with Said Pasha's horse is to be on the same ground as the last heat, only run in a contrary direction, with an additional mile of heavy sand. You will hear from us when the thing comes off.

This letter was dated Alexandria, 6th of March 1853; and in *Bell's Life* of September 25th following came an account of a match between the English mare and an Arab belonging to Hallim Pasha, apparently substituted for that owned by Said Pasha; and it will be seen that, owing to an accident, the English horse did not win. The correspondent of that paper writes:

'On the 9th of August a match came off here between an English mare and an Arab horse for 350*l.* aside—distance 9½ miles, 4 miles 7 furlongs out, and the same distance back again, without stopping. The run out was accomplished in 15¾ minutes, and the Arab returned home in 11½ minutes, having performed the distance in 27¼ minutes. The English mare, about a mile from home, swerved from the straight road, and her jockey, in trying to turn her, upset her into a canefence; she thus lost the race. The English party engaged therein wish to take it up again; but Hallim Pasha, owner of the horse, refuses to run for less than fourteen miles, and for a sum of 1000*l.* to 10,000*l.*, and they, therefore, address themselves to the sporting world in England, in

hopes that some party in England may think it worth while to try the stamina of the English horse against the Arab on the above terms.

'The race lately run was on the Aboukir Road—4 miles 7 furlongs out, and the same back again.

'The English mare which ran against the Arab is five years old, 15¾ hands high, strongly built and wide-chested, lengthy, and perfectly sound. Her sire was —, and her dam by Touchstone, and she had already beaten every Arab we had tried against her in short distances up to three miles. But in this last race we had not sufficient time for training—say twenty days—and, in short, took it too easy; besides which we had not our former jockey, who was laid up, and we had to secure the services of a foreigner, who did not understand the thing. If she had been well ridden, we should probably have had a very different story to tell.

'The Arab horse belongs to Hallim Pasha, one of the old Viceroy's sons, who has constantly been using him in coursing gazelles, and has, he says, beaten, in bottom, all his other horses. In other respects he is a sorry-looking animal, 14 hands high, 6 years old, bright chestnut, and without one single point that would catch the eye of a connoisseur. Yet there is no doubt that he showed game enough in the late race, as he was scarcely ever touched with the whip, and, after he came in, his rider did not pull up, but galloped on about 1½ miles further to take the news of his success to his owner, who was ill in bed! This is the horse which Hallim Pasha now offers to run against anything that can be brought against him for

the distance of from 14 to 40 miles, and for a sum of 1000*l.* to 10,000*l.* a-side.'

CHAPTER IV.

A BATCH OF CURIOUS MATCHES.

In the case just narrated the Arab horse certainly showed wonderful power of endurance; but then it should be remembered that he was at home, running in a climate to which he was accustomed, and over a course to which he was no stranger. But the question was not to be considered as settled. English officers on their way to India would still brag of the superior qualities of the English thoroughbred; so a trial of another kind took place, the particulars of which were duly published in *Bell's Life*:

'A match which has caused quite a sensation here for some time past has at length been brought to a conclusion. It was a question of endurance between the Arab and the English horse in the desert; and this having been a much-vexed question for years past among sportsmen generally, an account of the proceedings will surely prove interesting to the readers of your columns.

'The above-mentioned question of endurance having been raised between his Highness Prince Hallim and Mr. Ross, the former offered to bet ten to one that no English horse could go through a week's gazelle-hunting with him in the desert; he, of course, always riding the same Arab horse. Mr. Ross at once accepted the challenge, and a bet was consequently made, the Prince laying 1000*l.* against 100*l.* The affair was originally fixed to come off in January, but for some reason was referred again and again until

the present month. The Prince chose from his stable for this undertaking his little Arab horse Al Cissi, who, it may be remembered, won the grand Egyptian prize of 500 sovs., three miles, at the last Alexandrian race-meeting, he being then in Mr. Smart's possession; whilst Mr. Ross depended upon his chestnut mare Beechnut to accomplish the task. The Prince rode for himself; but Mr. Ross, having business matters to occupy him at home, intrusted his mount to a friend. Having been an eye-witness to the affair, I am enabled to give you an accurate account.

'On the 14th inst., the competitors having met at Shoubrah Palace, the residence of the Prince, we started off at a canter for the first encampment in the desert at a spot near a small village called Khankah. An hour and a quarter brought us to our destination, neither of the horses having at all suffered, though it is to be remarked that, not having started till 4 p.m., in the cool of the day, and proceeded at a pace less than an exercise canter, there was nothing to hurt either of them, the road being extremely good going the whole way. The mare was very restless during the whole night, and twice broke loose from her picket, though not until having eaten her supper with a hearty goodwill; while the horse, though perfectly quiet and comfortable, refused his food altogether. On the morning of the 15th, a little before sunrise, 4.30 a.m., we started for the real hunt. The mare was very fidgety, and took considerably more out of herself in consequence than if she had taken it quietly during the five and a half hours of walking before finding a gazelle. The hawks were flown and the dogs

slipped at this point, and, after a run of about two miles and a half, the gazelle was taken; the two horses both were apparently as fresh now as when we started. We now started off on our way to join the tents, which had been ordered to meet us at a certain point. We proceeded at a slow canter—so slow that the English mare simply trotted over the hard ground, cantering merely through the heavy sand. Unfortunately for the mare's chance, we missed the way, and instead of going towards the camp went off in the opposite direction. After proceeding at this pace for an hour and a half, the mare, who was going within herself, with the bit between her teeth, suddenly stopped, as if shot. The rider immediately dismounted, and endeavoured to keep her on her legs, but, reeling about as if tipsy, she went a few paces forward and then fell. The Prince immediately rode off for assistance, but returned in about twenty minutes with no aid, having found out the mistake we had made, and not knowing how far off the tents we might be. Assistance being thus rendered impossible in our present situation, the only remedy was to endeavour to procure it as quickly as possible. His Highness now dismounted, and having placed the mare's saddle on the horse, we started off on foot in the direction of the tents. Three hours and a half had elapsed before we reached the encampment, from which the Prince at once despatched his veterinary surgeon and Mr. Ross's groom to the spot where the mare was lying, to render her assistance, if not too late; they, however, returned, bringing the news of her death, and reporting that the vultures had already commenced to devour her carcass; the body was

perfectly stiff, proving that she must have died very shortly after leaving her. The Arab horse on arriving at the encampment showed not the slightest sign of fatigue, and, unlike the previous night, went into his nosebag with a goodwill. The match was thus brought to a speedy conclusion, and I might even say satisfactory, as it proved beyond doubt, at least to all present, that for slow continued work the Arab is immeasurably superior to his English brethren. I should add that the Arab horse continued hunting the following four days, always going strong and well; at the same time the hunting on the succeeding days was of shorter duration than on the first occasion. From my own personal observation of the merits and demerits of each horse, I am of opinion that for any given distance of ground the English horse would always show his superiority, but for slow, continued, and indefinite work the Arab is far superior. They seem to be able to go for ever at their own pace, but if fairly extended they shut up almost immediately. Thus in our race-meetings we have always found that in the five-mile race the English horses can beat the Arab by a mile. I think there is no doubt but that the heat alone caused the defeat of the mare, as, calculating it at the outside, she could only have gone forty miles, and, at the pace described, under ordinary circumstances it would be next to nothing to a well-trained horse; but it is a difficult question to conceive the heat in the desert, with no kind of vegetation or shade near, and with the sand reflecting back upon you. On getting in between two sand-hills, the temperature may be best imagined by fancying yourself in a hot oven. On this

day we had not a breath of wind. What would it have been if a "khamseen," or hot wind, had been blowing? E. T.

'Cairo, May 28th, 1865.'

This was not considered conclusive either, and *Bell's Life* for a few weeks was flooded with correspondence on the comparative merits of the English thoroughbred and the Arab. One of the best written letters on the subject is the following, which appeared on the 8th of July 1865:

'I observe in your issue of the 24th ult. a letter on the subject of the endurance of English and Arab horses. As I have owned Arab horses both in India and in Egypt, and made use in India of English-bred horses, Australian, Cape, and Government stud-bred horses, as well as those got by English stallions out of country-bred mares, and even the country-bred horses themselves, I venture to take up my pen on the subject of the comparative merits of the English blood and the Arab, especially at this moment, when the stamina of our horses is called in question, and the public mind is directed thereto.

'It appears from the match between H.H. Hallim Pasha and Mr. Ross that the English mare never had a chance in the trial, as she showed symptoms of distress soon after starting, and was evidently suffering all the way. I do not consider that this is a fair trial of the superiority of Arab horses over English as regards endurance. Much, of course, would depend upon the relative state of health and condition in which the animals were at starting, and it is also possible that the English mare had some organic defect which, though not apparent

in her ordinary work, gave way when put to such a severe test. Another truth is that it is quite impossible to judge comparatively of the merits of English and Arab horses in such a climate. English horses are like English men, they suffer as severely from heat as we do, and their frames become as relaxed; though we both have the pluck to go in and do a good thing in a spurt when wanted, we have not the physical ability to contend in a tropical climate against its native inhabitants when the question at issue is one of endurance. Horses suffer equally with men from liver complaint, heart complaint, and disease of the lungs; and most all the English horses of which I have been the possessor in India have evidently felt the effects of the climate and the demand on their constitution as much as I did myself. This was strikingly exemplified to me, and I had good opportunity of judging of the powers of different breeds of horses during the Mutiny campaign in 1857-8, as I then had in my stud an English horse, an Australian, a stud-bred, and several Arabs. The Australian was a thoroughbred, and the English was probably three-quarters bred, and a clever animal. The stud-bred horse showed quality also, but was as soft as butter, and I always got to the end of him the soonest of all. The Arabs were beautiful specimens of the Awcezeh caste, and as hardy and as wiry as iron. At the same time, during the winter months, or cold weather, I found little difference between the Arabs and the English or Australian horses—they all did their work well; but when the weather was more advanced, and the hot weather of April and May set in, the depression and lassitude of the English horse became

very apparent, and he was not within stones of himself to undergo fatigue. He became fretful and impatient, and at the action of Bareilly, when stationed in the rear of a troop of horse artillery, I could scarcely get him to approach the guns, and at each discharge he sprang into the air like a rocket, nearly dragging me out of the saddle. The Australian suffered less from nervousness, but he lost condition rapidly, and I was almost obliged to put him out of work entirely by the beginning of May. The Arab horses, on the contrary, did not feel the effects of the heat in the least. As a proof of this I may mention that I had two Arab horses sent up to me from Bombay. They left that town in November, and did not reach me until the day after the final evacuation of Lucknow, about the 20th April, having been marching continually for five months, and having undergone many vicissitudes—being passed from column to column, and making forced marches continually, and being fed irregularly and scantily while left to the care of native syces or grooms. Still, they arrived at Lucknow in perfect trim, and continued to do fast work throughout the hot season, at the end of which period, on my leaving the field, I sold them for 400*l*. I remember well on one occasion four of my horses had a fair trial, as they, each in their turn, were ridden on the same day. It was the day on which Lord Clyde marched from Buntara on Lucknow, before opening the siege operations. We were in the saddle at seven A.M., and were fighting all day from ten or eleven till dusk. My horses had very little rest, carrying orders, &c., and at seven o'clock I received an order to start as soon as I had

dined, and meet the siege-train under Sir Robert Walpole, and conduct it to its ground. I accordingly started at once. I rode my English horse, and I did not get back from duty till about eleven A.M. the next day. I had thus been nearly twenty-eight hours in the saddle, the last twelve or fourteen of which I rode my English horse, and he stood the work well. Certainly I was tired enough myself, and I had the full means of testing the relative powers of all the horses. Neither the English horse nor the Australian showed any want of stamina; the only one that flinched was the stud-bred. Still, all things considered, I should prefer, for a long journey in that climate or in Egypt, an Arab to any other horse; his education suits him more to undergo fatigue. His stomach is habituated from infancy to scanty food and water, and his frame to endure heat and rough usage; above all, he is sounder in the legs and feet. He is a good-tempered, willing, and docile slave, and a rare agent with which to traverse a distance in an open country, and, above all, in his own climate in the months of May and June, when the "khamseen," or fifty days' hot wind, blows loaded with sand, and the fate of the poor English mare is not to be wondered at. I lost in the same way a favourite greyhound in Arabia, in August 1850, which died of disease of the heart, after a few days' illness, the result of a distressing run after a gazelle, near the "Ayoun Mousa," or Well of Moses, on the Gulf of Suez. Poor Spring! Peace to his manes; he was buried at Jeddah with naval honours, to the horror of its Moslem inhabitants. However, all these trials bear upon the point of my letter of last week. Let

as be particular in breeding from sound and stout animals.

COSMOPOLITE.

An English horse that had seen some service in a hot climate like India would perhaps be the best to pit against the Arab. Our troops in India get most of their horses from Australia or the Cape of Good Hope, but there are some Arabs and some of other breeds. A great authority on horses says:

'The best horses met with in India are, most of them, it is said, derived direct from Persia, though of Arabian origin. It is remarkable that these are also in most cases vicious and intractable, except to their known attendants, to whom, notwithstanding, they yield an obedience the very reverse of the savage nature they display to others. A general officer of the Royal Artillery related an anecdote of an Arabian for which he had given a large sum during his military service in India. This horse was always forced to be held by two coolies for his master to mount him; and it was always necessary also that the coolie to which the horse was most attached should be present at his dismounting, to prevent his being attacked by the horse. One day, the general, having prolonged his ride beyond the accustomed hour, on his arrival at home thoughtlessly dismounted, and ran up-stairs to the drawing-room without waiting for the coolie. The consequence was that he had not entered the room many moments before the horse made his appearance, but evidently without any vicious intent, for he, immediately on seeing his master, knuckered with pleasure. Of course with a horse of such value it was a subject of consideration how he was to be got down again. However, when the coolie appear-

ed he made light of the matter, and taking him by the bridle, with little trouble and no ill-consequence safely led him down the stairs; and from that time, by some strange caprice, the animal showed as much personal attachment to his master as to the favourite coolie.'

The Persians from the earliest ages have been a horsey nation. Every one in the country rides, and rides well too.

'Before 1800, no political mission from a European nation had visited the Court of Persia for a century; but the English had fame as soldiers from the report of their deeds in India. An officer of one of the frigates which conveyed Sir John Malcolm's mission, who had gone ashore at Abusheher, and was there mounted on a spirited horse, afforded no small entertainment to the Persians by his bad horsemanship. The next day the man who supplied the ship with vegetables, and who spoke a little English, met him on board, and said, "Don't be ashamed, sir; nobody knows you. Bad rider! I tell them you, like all English, ride well, but that time they see you, you very drunk." The worthy Persian thought it would have been a reproach for a man of a warlike nation not to ride well, but none for a European to get drunk.

'During Sir John Malcolm's first visit to Persia, he, when riding one day near a small encampment of Afshar families, expressed doubts to his Mehmander, a Persian nobleman, as to the reputed boldness and skill in horsemanship of their females. The Mehmander immediately called to a young woman of handsome appearance, and asked her in Turkish if she was a soldier's daughter.

Blaine's Encyclo. of Rural Sports.

She said she was. "And you expect to be a mother of soldiers?" She smiled. "Mount that horse," said he, pointing to one with a bridle, but without a saddle, "and show this European Elchee the difference between a girl of a tribe and a citizen's daughter." She immediately sprang upon the animal, and, setting off at full speed, did not stop till she had reached the summit of a small hill in the vicinity, which was covered with loose stones. When there she waved her hand over her head, and came down the hill at the same rate at which she had ascended it. Nothing could be more dangerous than the ground over which she galloped; but she appeared quite fearless, and seemed delighted at having the opportunity of vindicating the females of her tribe from the reproach of being like the ladies of cities.*

CHAPTER V.

FAMOUS JOCKEYS.

A good horse, if he is to figure to advantage, must have a good rider; and what is more, the quadruped knows perfectly well the quality of the biped on his back. In the hands of an unskilful jockey the best horse that ever trod turf may fail to hold his own even in the company of second-raters, if the latter have the advantage of being piloted by clever horsemen. And the qualities which go to the making of a first-rate jockey are far rarer than most people imagine. He must not only be possessed of great nerve and coolness—he must have a firm and graceful seat, fine hands, and above all must be a good judge of pace, able to calculate whether the horse he

is riding can last the distance, up to what stage he will have to be nursed, and when to make the final effort. He must exercise his wits as well as his limbs. Besides, his duties are attended with considerable danger: his life and limbs are constantly in jeopardy, and the wasting process to which he must perpetually submit is not calculated to strengthen either his muscles or his nerves. Taking all these things into consideration, it is not surprising that a first-rate jockey should be in great demand, and that large sums should be paid to secure his services. Moreover, so strong are the temptations to dishonesty that an owner of racehorses knows that the best, if not the only, way to secure the fidelity of a jockey is to pay him well.

But the life of a popular jockey is by no means 'all sunshine and forced strawberries'; it is, and has ever been, an arduous calling, as the following facts will show:

'With jockeys in high repute it is necessary to remain in "condition" from the middle of March till the end of October, though a week or a fortnight are quite sufficient time for a rider to reduce himself from his natural weight to sometimes a stone or a stone and a half below it. An inquiry into this subject was made by Sir John Sinclair, and it was stated by Mr. Sandiver, a surgeon long resident at Newmarket, that John Arnall, when rider to the Prince of Wales, was desired to reduce himself as much as he could to enable him to ride a particular horse; in consequence of which he abstained from every kind of food, saving an apple occasionally, for the space of eight days, and declared himself not only uninjured, but in better wind, and altogether more fit to contend in a severe race, than before he com-

* *Bentley's Miscellany*, 1832.

menced this unnatural course of diet.

'When moderately reduced, through exercise taken in a suit of proper sweaters—say eight, or at most ten, miles' brisk walk—repeated for two or three days, nothing can exceed the delicious sensation of health and elasticity which comes over a man, after being rubbed down with a coarse towel and fresh clothed for the remainder of the day. The effect is visible on the skin, which assumes a remarkably transparent hue, whilst after a repetition of such regimen condition follows every sweat, till the jockey becomes as sleek as the animal he is going to ride.

'There was, I mind, a favourite sweating-ground with the Newmarket jocks, of about four miles out, kept by a "Mother Onion," or some such name, whither a whole brigade of antique-visaged little gentlemen, carrying as much clothing as would suffice for many much taller personages, might be seen bathed in perspiration, either swinging their arms to-and-fro to increase the muscular action, and tramping after each other in single file on the footpath bordering the high-road, or else encountered over the public-house fire, scraping the perspiration from their heads and faces with a horn carried for the purpose, precisely as a race-horse is scraped after a race. After resting thus for half an hour or so, and imbibing a tumbler of warm beverage to increase the sweat, they return at a good pace to Newmarket, perhaps to turn in for a short time and lie loaded with blankets, in addition to their load of sweaters, when they finally strip and groom themselves carefully for the evening. Some men are bad wasters, when nothing but very severe exercise, aided by medicine and the most complete

self-denial under every craving appeal for food, suffices to get off the last twenty-four ounces. Sam Chifney, Bill Scott, and Robinson were tall men by comparison with others of the fraternity, and consequently not so easy to reduce. But the season once concluded, few men are more convivial or hospitable than the jockey, when ample revenge is taken upon the sporting Lent they have conformed to so piously.*

One would almost imagine that such a severe course of training would sweat all the spirit out of a man or boy; but it does not, and the slim manikins are always lively. One of the great events of every summer is a cricket-match between jockeys and gentlemen connected with the sporting press, and the display invariably made by the former proves that they have a good deal of energy left after all the severe and drastic process of reduction to which they have been subjected.

As an illustration of the mirth, fun, and good-humour which generally prevail among the fraternity of jockeys we may give the following: 'A laughable incident which took place at York many years ago, when the celebrated Buckle was in his palmy days. At that time Mr. Rhodes was the clerk of the course, the starter, and the judge, and wore a very large and conspicuous bushy wig. Buckle, who was about to ride one of Colonel Mellish's horses, was behind time at the post, and kept the competitors, as well as the starter, waiting. On Buckle coming up mounted, Mr. Rhodes said, "Come, come; you're behind time again. This may do at Newmarket, Mr. Buckle, but it won't do at York!" Buckle, eyeing his wig, replied, "I say,

* *The Bye-Lanes and Downs of England*, by Sylvanus.

old un, what do you ask for the wig! I've a bull-bitch at home about to pup—just the thing for her!" "Go!" said the starter, and off the horses rushed. Buckle was last, and turning his head repeated, "What do you ask for the wig?" amid the laughter of the spectators and the chagrin of Rhodes, who proceeded to the judge's box. Buckle had the race in hand, and won it in fine style. As he was passing the post a winner, Buckle turned his head aside and repeated, "What do you ask for the wig, old un?" Rhodes never heard the last of this—it became a by-word in the streets.*

But it is time to turn to some of the most famous jockeys, whose sayings and doings deserve to be rescued from oblivion; and first we will take the jockey just referred to, Francis Buckle.

This celebrated and accomplished horseman was the son of a saddler at Newmarket—which may account for his prowess in the pigskin—and began his career in the Honourable Richard Vernon's stables at a very early age. He rode the winners of five Derby, seven Oaks, and two St. Leger Stakes, besides, to use his own words, 'most of the good things at Newmarket.' But it was in 1802 that he so greatly distinguished himself at Epsom by taking long odds that he won both Derby and Oaks on what were considered very unlikely horses to win either. His Derby horse was the Duke of Grafton's Tyrant, with seven to one against him, beating Mr. Wilson's Young Eclipse, considered the best horse of his year. Young Eclipse made the play, and was opposed by Sir C. Bunbury's Orlando, who contested every inch of ground for the first mile. From Buckle's

fine judgment of pace he was convinced they must both stop; so following and watching them with Tyrant, he came up and won, to the surprise of all who saw him, *with one of the worst horses that ever won a Derby.* Buckle, having made one of his two events safe, had then a fancy that Mr. Wastell's Scotia could win the Oaks if he were on her back, and he got permission to ride her. *She was beaten three times between Tattenham Corner and home;* but he got her up again in front, and won the race by a head. The Newmarket people declared they had never seen a race before snatched out of the fire, as it were, by fine riding.

Buckle's weight was favourable, being seldom called upon to reduce himself, as he could ride seven stone eleven pounds with ease. He continued riding in public until past his sixty-fifth year, and his nerve was good even to the last, although, as might be expected, he was latterly shy of a crowd, and generally cast an eye to the state of the legs and feet when asked to ride a horse he did not know.

But it is not only in public, but in private life that Buckle stood well. He was a kind father and husband, and a good master; and his acts of charity were conspicuous for a person in his situation of life, who might be said to have gotten all he possessed first by the sweat of his brow and then at the risk of his life. He was a great patron of the sock and buskin, and often bespoke plays for the night in country towns. He was a master of hounds, a breeder of greyhounds, fighting cocks, and bull-dogs, and always celebrated for his hacks. In the language of the stud-book his first wife had no produce, but out of the second he had several

* *Turf Characters*, by Martingale.

children. We may suppose he chose her as he would a race-horse, for she was not only very handsome, but very good. He left three sons comfortably and respectably settled in life—one a solicitor, one a druggist, and the other a brewer. 'Young Buckle was his nephew, and considered a fair jockey.'

No man experienced more than Buckle both the smiles and frowns of the blind goddess, and on more than one occasion he suffered the extreme of ill-luck. One of these untoward events took place at Lewes, where he had backed very heavily a horse of Mr. Durand's, but was subsequently retained to ride another in the same race. He mounted, and, highly to his credit and honour, he won. With little cash left, it now became a matter of moment with the honest jockey how to get back to Newmarket. In this dilemma, however, a gentleman offered a seat in his carriage. Off they went, and all things went smooth too, until they approached the last toll-bar near Newmarket, when the silver of the *conducteur* began to fail, and he applied to Buckle to pay the toll. The budget then must come out, and he confessed to this kind friend that, by the race in question, he had lost his all. Shortly after this they met a beggar, and to him Buckle threw his last shilling, exclaiming at the same time 'that he would never take that into Newmarket.'

Buckle was not only a skilful rider, but a remarkably good judge of a horse, as the following anecdote will show:

"The owner of *Violante* (a celebrated mare early in the present century), Lord Grosvenor, not thinking her worth training, had

* *Nimrod, The Chase, the Turf, and the Road.*

† *New Sporting Magazine*, 1832.

condemned her to be sold as a hack for as much as she would fetch. Buckle, by chance, saw her, and, with that quick decision which so strongly marked his character, asked the groom her price. "Fifty, sir." "I'll have her," was the reply. The mare was accordingly in the very act of being led to Buckle's stable when her noble owner appeared. "Hullo!" addressing the groom, "who has bought that filly?" "Buckle, my lord." "Ho! Buckle bought her? She sha'n't go; there must be something more about her than we think; take her back." And back she went, but only to come forward as the best mare that ever ran in England. Although no explanation or acknowledgment ever followed this novel mode of being off, Buckle never grumbled.*

Indeed, he was one of the coolest men that ever mounted a horse, and to the fact that he never lost his composure may be attributed many of his victories. A jockey who loses his nerve at a critical moment in a race had better give up riding.

Buckle's chief competitor was Dennis Fitzpatrick, and against him some of Buckle's best riding was called forth. In the race between *Hambletonian* and *Diamond* for 3000 guineas, he is acknowledged to have displayed the most consummate skill, and to have won the race by manœuvring between the ditch and the turn of the lauda, so as to have gained considerably upon his antagonist ere they pushed up the hill. And, as a part of the events of that day, Buckle related the following anecdote: Sir Harry Vane Tempest had betted heavily on *Hambletonian's* winning, and, in proportion to the heavy sums in his book, his interest in the event had deepened, and his nerves became

* *New Sporting Magazine*, 1832.

proportionably unsteady. In the deepest apprehension, and just as the horses arrived at the starting-post, he approached his jockey with his last orders, and to inquire yet once more his opinion as to the event of the race. It was then that the cool and unruffled demeanour of the man of nerve, confident in his own skill and resources, reassured the baronet, who exclaimed, as his own fevered hand touched that of Buckle, "By G—, but I would give the whole stake to be half as calm as you!"

Another famous rider of the past—long since dead, and forgotten save by very few—was William Arnall, who rode for most of the great sportsmen of his day at Newmarket, and was considered particularly to excel in matches. He was much afflicted with gout, but when well was a fine rider, and moreover as steady and honest as his father was before him. Being occasionally called upon to waste, he felt the inconvenience of his disorder, and the following anecdote is related of him: Meeting an itinerant piper towards the end of a long and painful walk, 'Well, bold boy,' said he, 'I have heard that music cheers the weary soldier; why should it not enliven the wasting jockey? Come, play a tune, and walk before me to Newmarket.'

The Chifneys were also renowned riders, though the scandal attaching to the Running Rein business (which will be hereafter spoken of) somewhat tarnished the lustre of the name. But, without doubt, the Chifneys, father and son, were splendid riders, as is shown by the following opinion of one who was no mean judge:

'The late Samuel Chifney pre-

sented the *beau-ideal* of a jockey—elegance of seat, perfection of hand, judgment of pace all united, and power in his saddle beyond any man of his weight that yet sat in one. It is scarcely necessary to add that he was son of a celebrated jockey of the same name, consequently well bred to his profession. Chifney's method of finishing a race was the general theme of admiration on the Turf. "Suppose," says he, "a man has been carrying a stone too heavy to be pleasant in one hand, would he not find much ease by shifting it into the other? Thus, after a jockey has been riding over his horse's fore-legs for a couple of miles, must it not be a great relief to him when he sits back in his saddle, and, as it were, divides the weight more equally? But caution is required," he adds, "to preserve a due equilibrium, so as not to disturb the action of a tired horse." Without doubt this celebrated performer imbibed many excellent lessons from his father, but he has been considered the more powerful jockey of the two."

Thomas Holcroft, author of the well-known comedy, *The Road to Ruin*, who flourished at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century, was in early life a stable-boy in the Newmarket training stables. It was in his time that 'sweepstakes' became fashionable, and in his *Memoirs* he speaks thus of such races:

'In addition to matches, plates, and other modes of adventure, that of "sweepstakes" had come into vogue; and the opportunity it gave to deep calculators to secure themselves from loss by hedging their bets greatly multiplied the bettors, and gave uncommon animation to the sweepstakes mode. In one of these the Hon. Richard

* *New Sporting Magazine*, 1832.

† *Nimrod, The Chase, the Turf, and the Road*.

* *Nimrod, The Chase, the Turf, and the Road*.

Vernon had entered a colt, and as the prize to be obtained was great, the whole stable was on the alert. It was prophesied that the race would be a severe one; for although the horses had none of them run before, they were all of the highest breed—that is, their sires and dams were in the first lists of fame. As was foreseen, the contest was indeed a severe one, for it could not be decided—it was a *dead-heat*; but our colt was by no means among the first. Yet so adroit was Captain Vernon in hedging his bets, that if one of the two colts that made it a *dead-heat* had beaten, our master would on that occasion have won ten thousand pounds; as it was he lost nothing, nor would in any case have lost anything. In the language of the Turf, he stood ten thousand pounds to nothing!—a fact so extraordinary to ignorance and so splendid to poverty!

Holcroft began betting next morning, and by the end of the week had lost half a year's wages.*

In 1824, Robinson the jockey made a wager (in which he obtained good long odds) that he would in that year, and within the week, win the Derby and Oaks races, and also get married: all three somewhat problematical occurrences, the chances of success as regards the two first events being a matter determined by a mathematical calculation, and the latter, we presume, being almost reduced to a certainty by previous courtship. Of course the chances were in favour of those who laid odds, but on this occasion the odds were

floored; for Robinson won the Derby on Cedric, the Oaks on Cobweb, and his wife—no, what we mean to say is, and he also got married within the week.†

William Scott, who died in October 1848, was another celebrated jockey, who, in his day, had no superior and few equals, winning as he did no less than nine St. Legers, four Derbys, and three Oaks, besides innumerable smaller events. He rode nine winners for the Champagne Stakes, and six for the Great Two-year-olds at Doncaster. His Derby triumphs were on St. Giles, Mundig, Attila, and Cotherstone.

On the Monday prior to Cotherstone's running for the Derby, Prince Albert rode over from Esher to Leatherhead to look at this rare specimen of a racehorse, and William was frequently heard to say that had the Prince known what he (William) and Cotherstone were going to do on the following Wednesday, he would have made them both baronets!

It is said of him in this race, when Sam Day was put upon Tom Tulloch, in order to make running for Iago, Sam made the pace terrific for the first mile; then finding his horse nearly out, he looked over his shoulder anxiously for a sight of the Pigburn horses, when Scott exclaimed, "Go along, you old buffer; it is Sir Tatton coming. None of the Pigburn division here yet." Scott was commonly supposed to be a Yorkshireman, but as a matter of fact he was born at Chippenham in Wiltshire.†

* *Horse-Racing, its History, &c.*

† *Sporting Magazine*, 1848.

* *Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft.*